

LINKING PEOPLE + SPACES

A strategy for Melbourne's open space network, prepared by Parks Victoria in 2002



LINKING



PEOPLE + SPACES

Parks Victoria released Linking People and Spaces as a draft in August 2001. Over a three month consultation period we received more than 100 written submissions. We considered all submissions when we were preparing this final version.

*Linking People and Spaces is available at Parks Victoria's website
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au*

The website will be periodically updated to reflect the actions completed across the network.

This publication might be of assistance to you and Parks Victoria has made every effort to ensure that the information in the report is accurate. Parks Victoria does not guarantee that the report is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your specific purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequences that might arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

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MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Melbourne's world-class network of parks, trails and waterways has been planned, fought for and created over the last 140 years. This precious legacy has many recreational, cultural, ecological and economic benefits that are essential to the city's healthy functioning and liveability.

In December 2001, the Bracks Government finalised the transfer of more than 4000 hectares of metropolitan parkland from freehold title to Crown Land status. For many years these parks have been vulnerable to ad hoc decisions of previous governments. Without adequate protection through legislation, and without a sound strategy, this land could have been sold off without any opportunity for public debate. From December many of our popular parks – Jells Park, Brimbank, Braeside, Point Cook, Westerfolds and others – are now reserved forever as Crown Land.

The Bracks Government recognises the importance of well-managed quality open space and is committed to improving the liveability and sustainability of Melbourne. All Melburnians should have the opportunity to enjoy the many benefits of a well-planned and diverse open space network. Improving people's choices and ensuring there is equity of access to a diverse range of recreational opportunities is central. In producing *Linking People and Spaces* the Government and community are committed to a twenty year plan, whereby six new regional parks are planned for the outer urban areas of Werribee, Melton, Hume/Whittlesea and Cranbourne. These initiatives are an aid to redressing the inequities that have developed in the provision of open space to the people of Melbourne.

Through *Linking People and Spaces* the Government will implement its commitment to developing a liveable and 'greener' city. Based on submissions and feedback from consultation workshops a long-term vision has been created for Melbourne's open space. In the report, the Government has also established immediate implementation priorities that will benefit both local communities and the many interstate and overseas people who make more than fifty million visits to our wonderful parks each year.



Sherryl Garbutt MP
Minister for Environment and Conservation



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of a long history of strategic forward planning Melbourne now has a world-class open space network of regional parks, shared-use trails, coasts and bays, and areas of high environmental and cultural values. This legacy, planned and implemented over more than a century, is now embedded in the city's landscape and character and in our community's values.

However our parks represent more than this. The value of parks is reflected in social benefits of health and well-being, the environmental benefits of protecting conservation and biodiversity values and economic returns arising either directly or indirectly from tourism, education, health, transport and leisure industries. Continuing to protect, improve and extend the network is therefore essential to the healthy functioning of our urban environment and lifestyle.

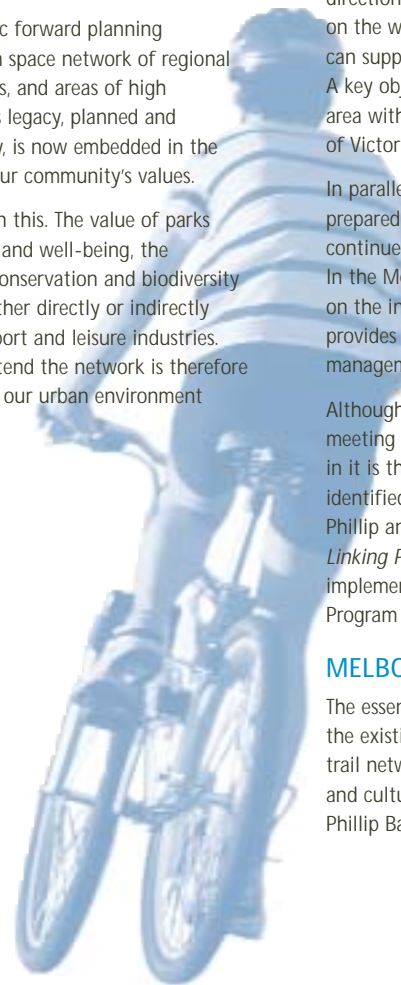
Equally important is the need for open space planning to be a part of broader metropolitan planning in order to maximise the sustainability and integration of urban spaces and precincts. In the Metropolitan Strategy, developed by the Department of Infrastructure, this framework is provided and key strategic directions are articulated for metropolitan Melbourne. The focus is on the ways in which land-use planning and transport development can support Melbourne's social, environmental and economic needs. A key objective is to better integrate the life of the metropolitan area with the economic and social development of the whole of Victoria.

In parallel with the Metropolitan Strategy, Parks Victoria has prepared *Linking People and Spaces*, a strategy and vision for the continued growth and improvement of our open space network. In the Metropolitan Strategy Parks Victoria incorporates and builds on the initiatives outlined in *Linking People and Spaces* and provides a strategic context for long-term planning and management of open space within the metropolitan region.

Although *Linking People and Spaces* is strongly focused on meeting the recreational needs of Melburnians, also supported in it is the implementation of detailed environmental priorities identified in Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy and the draft Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan. In addition, *Linking People and Spaces* contains guidance for funding implementation priorities through the Parks Victoria Grants Program and other funding sources.

MELBOURNE'S OPEN SPACE

The essential elements of the metropolitan open space network are the existing regional parks, the extensive shared-use metropolitan trail network, the waterways, green links, areas of environmental and cultural significance, coastal foreshores, and waters of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port.



THE VISION

A linked network of open space for all to enjoy as a part of everyday life, preserved and enhanced into the future.

Previous strategies have been a part of defining and developing the open space network. Through *Linking People and Spaces* the network will continue to be built and improved, so that open space becomes an integral part of our everyday life. Planning will also be undertaken now to meet Melbourne's future open space needs. Underpinning the vision are the following five guiding principles supported by key objectives.

Partnerships

As a result of partnerships between state-government and non-government agencies, local government, educational and research institutions and the broader community, complementary management of the metropolitan open space network will be facilitated. Best value from resources invested in Melbourne's open space will also be maximised to ensure that broader social goals, including equity and access, are addressed.

Equity of access

The current distribution of metropolitan open space is not equal for all residents of Melbourne. Through *Linking People and Spaces* equity of access to open space especially in the west, north and south-east of Melbourne will be improved, and planning for open space needs will be directed to ensure equitable access for future generations.

Diversity

Melbourne's network of open space should include a diversity of recreational opportunities, in response to our multicultural society and to changing community needs and values. The network also involves protection and improvement of a diversity of representative environmental, landscape and cultural values.

Flexibility and responsiveness

As a result of creative and innovative planning, management of open space will be responsive to changing and emerging community needs and trends. Ongoing and detailed input from local communities will be an integral part of future management.

Sustainability

Through being part of a well-planned network, Melbourne's open spaces will be safe and sustainable and will reflect social and community needs. This outcome will require forward planning for future open space needs to ensure cost-effective, affordable and timely investment. Maximising the viability and therefore the sustainability of conservation values will require varied responses, including a network wide focus on expanding and linking protected areas.

KEY OUTCOMES

In *Linking People and Spaces* more than 150 actions are defined in order to realise the vision based on the principles and objectives outlined. The actions include planning and development of new parks; extensions to the metropolitan shared-use trail network; upgrades of visitor facilities and supporting infrastructure in existing parks, waterways and coastal activity nodes; and expansion of protected areas and urban land in public ownership.

Some of the key outcomes include:

- improving equity of access through provision of **six new parks** in Melbourne's growth corridors, including Werribee, Melton, Hume/Whittlesea and Cranbourne
- **completing gaps and extending shared-use trails** to support recreation and commuter use, including the Main Yarra Trail, the Bay trail and Federation Trail, to create a 1200 kilometre network
- forming continuous **open space links** between areas of parkland along Melbourne's foreshores and waterways, especially the western coastal foreshore of Port Phillip Bay, the Maribyrnong River, the Merri Creek and Frankston
- **improving access to the foreshore**, bays and major waterways through provision of recreational and berthing infrastructure at key activity nodes, including St Kilda, Sorrento and the Lower Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers
- setting priorities for **vegetation protection**, enhancement and restoration in line with the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan
- Organising **annual open space forums** for land managers to assist in developing co-operative and creative approaches to planning and management of Melbourne's open space network

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this strategy will involve the co-operative resources of a range of government and non-government land-management agencies, local government and the broader community. Parks Victoria will organise annual forums for open space managers to assist in developing a co-operative approach to planning and management and to provide an opportunity for communicating progress about the actions.

Funding implementation of the actions will similarly rely on the collective resources of federal, state and local government, other agencies and philanthropic and corporate sources. Information about the various funding sources that land managers and community groups working on open space can access will be available online at the Parks Victoria website; www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Other organisations such as the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the Victorian Coastal Council, the Central Coastal Board and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board will also continue to co-ordinate various aspects of the open space network.

A person wearing a cap, sunglasses, a dark t-shirt, shorts, and roller skates, standing with hands on hips. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the text.

CONTEXT

BACKGROUND

Linking People and Spaces encompasses most of the catchment of Port Phillip and Westernport. The region has an area of 11,000 square kilometres and topographical diversity ranging from basalt plains, dissected by deep-river gorges in the west, to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. Almost 5000 kilometres of natural streams and watercourses drain the region; approximately 30 per cent of the area is vegetated, 50 per cent is agricultural and about 20 per cent is urban.

Before European settlement, grasslands covered the flat basalt plains to the west. To the north, grassy woodlands gave way to the forested highlands of Kinglake and the Dandenong Ranges. The coastlines of Western Port and Port Phillip Bay were covered with grasslands, coastal scrub and heathlands. These early landscapes would have been influenced by the way Aboriginal people lived and interacted with the land.

In 1840, most of Melbourne's 10,000 residents lived in what we now know as the inner city. Over the next century, new housing developments mostly followed railway lines and key transportation routes. Extensive vegetation clearing was undertaken between 1830 and 1880 and beyond. After the introduction of the motor car, suburbs started to develop between the railway lines and extend to outlying areas. By 1996, Melbourne's population had reached 3.2 million, and the city area had increased substantially to include the Mornington Peninsula and Melton. The population is expected to have increased to about 3.9 million by 2021.

In the mid-1800s, as a result of establishment of major parkland reservations, a circle of magnificent inner-city parks was secured, including the Royal Botanic Gardens, Royal Park, the Fitzroy Gardens and Albert Park. However, from 1929 despite the recommendations of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, very little progress was made to cater for a burgeoning urban population, in part due to the economic and social impacts of the Depression and World War 2. It was not until the 1954 Metropolitan Planning Scheme, and subsequent purchase of regional parklands such as Dandenong Valley Parklands, Brimbank Park and extensive Yarra Valley Parklands, that Melbourne again had its reputation for being a city of parks reaffirmed.

As a result of past planning, open space is now an integral component of the urban environment. Melbourne has a world-class network of parks, gardens and trails enjoyed directly or indirectly by residents and visitors alike. These parks, forests and other reserves support about 70 per cent of the 250,000 hectares of indigenous vegetation retained in the Port Phillip and Westernport catchments.

THE BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE

Open space is not only for recreation and conservation of environmental and cultural values; it is the foundation of urban liveability. It underpins many social, ecological and economic benefits that are essential to the healthy functioning of the urban environment.

Conservation

Publicly owned open space has an important role in conservation of Melbourne's floral and faunal biodiversity. In fact, many of the state's rarest plants and animals are found in Melbourne's parks and reserves. It also contains many protected features of scientific and cultural interest, from heritage sites to geological formations. Forested parks and gardens assist in combating greenhouse-gas emissions, act as habitat corridors for wildlife, and assist in maintenance of water quality in urban waterways.

Urban liveability

Clean air and water, spacious parks and recreation facilities, and creative urban planning and design are important measures of how liveable our city is. When a park network is well designed and well integrated, urban liveability and urban amenity are improved. Many people enjoy the aesthetic values of open space and it is widely accepted that how the urban community looks, feels and functions is influenced by how much open space there is.

Improving our city's liveability is not only beneficial for the local community; it plays a part in Victoria's international competitiveness.

Economic

Many industries also derive a benefit, either directly or indirectly, from urban parks and gardens. These include tourism, education, health, transport, and the sport and recreation industries. Economic benefits can be direct, from fees and charges for use of a park or for services provided in the park. They may also be activity based, such as increasing the income accrued by neighbouring businesses, or indirect, such as increasing land values of neighbouring properties.

Health and wellbeing

Many open space benefits are extremely difficult to quantify. Melbourne's network of parks is part of the city's identity, and is a source of considerable community satisfaction and pride. Simply being in a park, either alone or interacting and socialising with other people, can be important in our experiencing a re-energising of spirit and relationship.

Undertaking physical activity is also important for maintaining physical and mental health. People who are inactive are almost twice as likely to die from heart disease than other people who are physically active. The value of physical activity is increasingly being recognised in public health, and it is now considered to be a 'best buy' for health promotion and disease prevention. According to studies undertaken by the Department of Human Services today's sedentary lifestyles are responsible for about 8 per cent of the burden of premature deaths in Victoria. People who are active are more likely to live longer, are less in danger from heart disease and stroke, and are less likely to suffer stress, anxiety and depression. Open space therefore has a significant part to play in provision of appealing and attractive areas for people to exercise in.

In understanding the benefits of open space the community's appreciation of its importance will increase. In conjunction with researchers and open space managers, the Government will continue to build and share a solid body of knowledge of these benefits in broader social, environmental and economic terms. Identifying future metropolitan open space needs and opportunities now and incorporating quality-design practices in the layout of new urban areas will result in maximisation of many of these benefits.

A CHANGING CITY

Melbourne is constantly changing. Population growth causes the city's physical shape to change as existing urban areas expand and as the city's boundaries extend outwards. In the past, provision of new parks has not always been part of the usual city-development process. A goal of this strategy is to ensure that planning for future open space and parklands is better integrated in the city's development and planning processes.

Previous strategies have been a part of identifying and developing the open space network. These include the 1988 Ministry for Planning and Environment report, The Metropolitan Open Space Plan, the 1992 Melbourne Parks and Waterways report Open Space 2000 Bay to Ranges – Implementing the Vision and the 1995 and revised 1998 Parks Victoria series of plans, A Guide to Priorities for Melbourne's Open Space Network. *Linking People & Spaces* replaces these earlier strategies and includes an outline of the framework and priorities for management and continued development of the network.

Although it is important to implement improvements to existing open space, it is equally important to consider likely trends and influences in order to adequately plan for emerging needs. An informed and strategic approach is essential for ensuring flexibility in order to keep pace with and anticipate the changing needs of Melbourne's resident population.

Although Parks Victoria is a key provider of regional parks, the management of metropolitan open space is widely spread and under the direct control of no single body. The region is characterised by a diversity of land tenures and a corresponding range of agencies and community groups that are responsible for managing these tenures under various pieces of legislation. Without an open space strategy, the potential for dilution of the open space effort through piecemeal decisions by individual groups is great.

PLANNING MELBOURNE'S FUTURE

In the Metropolitan Strategy, developed by the Department of Infrastructure, key strategic directions are articulated for metropolitan Melbourne. The focus is on the ways in which land-use planning and transport development can support Melbourne's social, environmental and economic needs. It also examines ways to better integrate the metropolitan area with the economic and social development of the whole state.

Past planning has resulted in a magnificent legacy of parks, waterways and environmental reserves for Melbourne. However, according to demographic data and park-visitor surveys conducted in recent years by Parks Victoria, inequities exist in the provision of recreational parkland at a regional level across Melbourne. Unless action is taken, this situation will worsen over the next twenty years as Melbourne's population continues to grow in the west, north and south-eastern urban corridors.

In parallel with the Metropolitan Strategy, Parks Victoria has prepared *Linking People and Spaces*; a strategy and vision for continued growth and improvement of our network of regional parks, waterways and trails. The Metropolitan Strategy will incorporate and build on the initiatives outlined in *Linking People and Spaces* and will provide strategic context for the long term planning and management of open space and areas of environmental significance located in the metropolitan region.

A PARKLANDS CODE: URBAN OPEN SPACE PRINCIPLES

To sustain the benefits of open space into the future, and to support the broad strategies and actions contained in *Linking People and Spaces*, the following metropolitan-wide guidelines are proposed for the planning and management of open space. These objectives relate to the network of urban open space including regional parks, waterways, reserves that have conservation and cultural value, coasts, and shared-use trails.

The Government commits to these principles for urban open space that is controlled by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and Parks Victoria located in Melbourne. Other managers of open space such as local government will give due consideration to these principles for their parklands.

Involving the community

Open space belongs to the community. Individuals and community groups should therefore be encouraged to take an active role in decision making for the network's future. Open space managers should promote this participation through open consultation, especially when major changes to park management and use are proposed. Managers should also continue to support community involvement in planting, regeneration and conservation of natural and cultural values.

Transparent planning processes

To ensure clear understanding of the management objectives for parks, any major urban park of an area of more than 100 hectares should be covered by a management plan, whereby decision-making frameworks and strategies for appropriate uses and developments are identified. The aim of these plans should be to provide long-term strategic direction, and the plans should be reviewed within a planned time horizon. Either a management plan or an explicit statement of management objectives should be developed for other urban parks.

To maximise broad-community access to open space, any exclusive occupation of parkland by community organisations should be restricted to activities that are consistent with the park's management objectives. When proposals exist to use parkland in a way that is inconsistent with management plans or zoning, the outcome should be determined through proper processes under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, whereby adequate opportunities are provided for public objections to be heard.

Buildings and other infrastructure can be used to facilitate people's enjoyment and use of open space. It is nonetheless important to ensure that their provision is consistent with the management objectives of the park and subject to appropriate Planning Scheme processes.

Securing the future of open space

Appropriate zoning of open space is integral to its long-term security and Public Park and Recreation Zone or Public Conservation and Resource Zone are the most applicable zonings for parkland purposes. The zoning should be consistent with relevant management plans and objectives for the land, whereby conservation zoning is applied in order to protect areas of high conservation value in which development of visitor facilities is limited.

Large regional parks and significant conservation areas should be protected under legislation, ideally by being permanently reserved under the *Crown Lands (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Existing public land that immediately adjoins waterways and coasts must remain in public ownership, and any developments through which public access along stream banks or foreshores is prevented will not be permitted. When additional land is identified as being critical to completion of open space links, through any proposed rezoning or subdivision of land planners will seek to ensure that the link is transferred to public ownership for open space purposes.

Changing land use

When proposals arise to change the land use of parkland, a decision should be made only once the proposal has been exposed to public scrutiny through processes under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. If a change in land use or in the nature of occupation is to occur that will result in a reduction of open space, the overall network of open space should be protected by way of addition of replacement parkland of equal or greater size and quality. Planners should also seek to ensure that areas that are at presently under-supplied with parkland are given priority when new areas of parkland are being established.

Environmental and recreational value of surplus government land will be fully evaluated before any decision is made on a proposal to sell land held by the Crown, a government department or a statutory authority.

Diversity

Urban open space should be used to accommodate the needs and aspirations of people of all abilities, cultures and ages. As much as possible in parks, planners should provide for nature conservation, recreation and play, formal and informal sport, social interaction, and peace and solitude.

Urban open space should include community sports facilities in a way that is consistent with other park activities. Users should enjoy access to sports areas when sporting activities are not in progress.

Sites and features of high scientific, nature-conservation, biodiversity, heritage, geological or landscape value will be protected by way of establishing appropriate reservations under state-government legislation.



MELBOURNE'S OPEN SPACE NETWORK

LINKING PEOPLE AND SPACES

In producing *Linking People and Spaces*, the Victorian Government is demonstrating its commitment to protecting existing metropolitan parklands and open space and to improving equitable provision of recreational opportunities, both now and in the future.

The strategy involves creation of a long-term vision for Melbourne's regional open space network and establishment of implementation priorities that benefit both local communities and the broader metropolitan community.

It also contains the basis for guiding implementation of open space initiatives through a partnership approach whereby the following four benefits are sure to be passed on to the community.

- A diverse range of open space and recreational opportunities
- A clear guide and process for the continuing management, protection, improvement and development of the open space network through which better co-ordination is promoted between open space managers and the community;
- A transparent process for allocating funding for the sustainable development and enhancement of open space
- A better understanding of future changes, trends and needs, and the flexibility necessary for responding to these factors for the benefit of future generations

Linking People and Spaces is primarily focused on planning for the regional open space network, which is complemented by and interconnected with a diverse local network.

The study area of *Linking People and Spaces* is illustrated in Map1 on page 11.

THE REGIONAL NETWORK

The most recognisable elements of the metropolitan open space network are the existing regional urban parks and urban-fringe parks, the extensive shared-use metropolitan trail network, the major waterways, the green links and areas of environmental and cultural significance and the coastal foreshores of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port. The focus of this report is on regional open space rather than district or local open space. The existing regional open space network is illustrated in Map 2 on page 12.

From the visitor's perspective, the network represents a continuum of open space reflecting different characteristics and values. Nevertheless in assessing and ensuring equity of access to local, district or regional open space, managers need to have some broad categorising of open space. The definition of the categories is not precise, but regional open space usually reflects specific characteristics. These areas tend to attract large numbers of visitors from across the metropolitan area, and can also attract interstate and international tourists. Most visitors visit infrequently but stay for several hours or organise a day trip from home. The areas are often large in size; contain areas of regional, state or internationally significant environmental or cultural values; and cater for a diversity of recreational or tourism opportunities. Regional shared-use trails usually link areas of regional open space. There are numerous organisations that manage regional open space across Melbourne, so there is clearly a need for partnerships in the overall planning and management of these assets.

District open space attracts visitors from a smaller catchment than does regional open space and visits to it are longer but less frequent compared with visits to local parks. Local open space has very high visitation and many repeat visitors, and is vitally important as space for recreation and relaxation for nearby residents. Local trails feed into regional trails from local catchments, so residents have access to regional open space. Local councils manage most local open space areas.

Map 1: Study Area Boundary



Legend

- Regional Centre
- Major Roads
- Existing Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Map 2: Melbourne's Open Space Network



REGIONAL PARKS

Melbourne's metropolitan regional parks are an important component of the overall open space network. They include opportunities for recreation, sport, social interaction, tourism, and relaxation and nature appreciation. Visitor use of metropolitan parks managed by Parks Victoria totalled some 15.2 million visit-days in 2001-02. Over the past three years growth in the number of visits to these parks has been steadily increasing at an average rate of 3 per cent per year. Given the greater frequency at which people use local and district parks, the total number of visits to the entire network of parks is substantially higher, an estimated 55 million. In Table 1, we list the main activities undertaken by visitors to metropolitan regional parks.

Figure 1. Activities undertaken by visitors in parklands.

The following results are from visitor surveys undertaken in metropolitan parks managed by Parks Victoria between 1995 and 1997. Park users were asked to identify the activities they had participated in during their park visit.

| Activity | Percentage of park visitors who participated |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Walking | 69.4 |
| Picnicking | 54.9 |
| Socialising | 47.8 |
| Sightseeing | 39.3 |
| Sitting around doing nothing | 36.7 |
| Relaxing, reading or sunbathing | 34.9 |
| Supervising children's play | 30.1 |
| Studying birds, plants or animals | 22.2 |
| Cycling | 13.0 |
| Walking the dog | 10.4 |
| Jogging | 3.1 |

Since implementation of the Metropolitan Open Space Plan introduced in 1988, six new major parks (Plenty Gorge Parklands, Braeside Park, Karkarook Park, Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, Cardinia Creek Parklands and the Mornington Peninsula National Park) have been established. Over this time, extensions have been made to eight other metropolitan parks (Dandenong Valley Parklands, Maribyrnong Valley Parklands, Point Cook Coastal Park (Cheetham Wetlands), Yarra Valley Parklands, Warrandyte State Park, Organ Pipes National Park, Kinglake National Park and Dandenong Ranges National Park).

In areas in which parkland networks are well established, future park management will be directed at maintaining parks and implementing improvements where appropriate. Planning for new parks will be undertaken to meet the needs of a physically changing metropolitan area (outward growth and urban consolidation) and to ensure that flexibility is sufficient for meeting unknown future trends. Provision of adequate access to parks in the major growth areas will be a priority for the immediate future. Planning is already underway to identify possible future parklands in the south-eastern growth corridor and in Melbourne's north and west.

Because of the shortage of available land in the inner areas, meeting the needs of a growing inner-urban population will be more challenging and different approaches will be required. Developing more durable facilities at many sites in order to cater for greater use, permitting multiple use of sites where appropriate and accommodating different patterns of use are some of the approaches that will have to be adopted. Improving the community's choices through improving linkages will also be a focus.

SHARED TRAILS

Off-road shared trails, which are the primary focus for this strategy, link Melbourne's significant areas of open space to local trails, recreational precincts, other interesting destinations and public transport. The trails are mainly located along waterways and easements and many traverse parklands and the foreshore.

Trails are an important recreational venue in their own right, but are also an essential link between people and places. Shared trails are not just bike trails; they are used for activities such as walking, inline skating and jogging. Provision of facilities for these activities results in improved personal health and can result in environmental-health benefits, through either managing access in sensitive areas or improving environmental values adjacent to trails by incorporating them in overall design and development.

The Principal Bicycle Network is not a new concept, and consists of both on-road and off-road trails through which an interconnected, accessible network of well-serviced, safe trail routes is formed. The PBN was developed by Bicycle Victoria and VicRoads through the Victorian Bicycle Advisory Council. However, the on-road and off-road components were recognised as providing two very different services and experiences, and therefore as supporting different users. In response, the Metropolitan Trail Network defined in the 1988 open space plan has been revised to reflect current needs and future growth, and is detailed on the Map 4 on page 50. In the MTN we build on the PBN off-road component. The network comprises of existing and proposed trails totalling approximately 1200 kilometres. The MTN consists of shared trails to ensure that the wider community has access to open space.

A substantial proportion of the newly defined MTN has already been developed. Since 1994, Parks Victoria and its predecessor organisations have spent \$15 million on trail construction and upgrading through the Agency Grants Program. In addition, \$4.3 million has been spent on trails by other agencies such as local government. However, it is estimated that approximately \$100 million of works is required to complete the MTN. Rapid growth in some urban-fringe areas has preceded planning for open space links and trail development. Therefore, significant work is required in order to develop many sections of the network.

Priorities for developing trails are based on criteria designed to achieve a safe, equitable, affordable and well-maintained system. Metropolitan trails are, or are part of, major arterial through-routes that link people to places and through which a range of trail types are provided in order to accommodate a diversity of needs, including commuting, recreation and leisure-based activities. In the detailed actions for each region with reference to shared trails, the focus is on closing key gaps in existing trails, creating extensions in future growth areas and forging links to destinations.

Closing of gaps in existing trails, will accompany implementation of an extended network of new trails in order to meet the growing demand in established urban areas and future growth areas such as Werribee, in the City of Wyndham; Caroline Springs, in the City of Melton; and Berwick and Cranbourne in the City of Casey. Residents in these areas will thereby have better access to existing trails and direct trail routes to parks, recreation nodes and other attractions.

Trails that have not been included in the MTN remain an important part of the overall trail system; however, they have been identified as mainly servicing local populations. Local trail networks are usually planned for and managed by local government and should, where possible, feed into the regional network to ensure connectivity across Melbourne.

Although the MTN identifies a need for trails and strategic linkages from one point to another, it is important to note that the alignments described and mapped are indicative only. The exact alignment of the proposed trails will be determined during detailed planning. Proper planning processes, including community consultation and feasibility studies, will be undertaken for each new trail proposal by the appropriate bodies before any works are commenced.

COASTS AND BAYS

Port Phillip Bay and Western Port and their foreshore areas are one of the most important and complex parts of Melbourne's open space network. The bays have a key role in providing diverse open space opportunities as well as linkages to other locations around the bays. Accessible foreshores located around Port Phillip Bay range over 500 hectares, a size that is comparable in size to the Dandenong Ranges National Park, yet they receive some 40 million visits per year. In addition to the foreshores, there is a range of facilities, such as piers and jetties, and structures such as South Channel Fort and Pope's Eye, through which diverse and unique recreational and tourism opportunities are provided. The vast majority of the coast is in public ownership, so it is accessible to everyone, and it is a quintessential part of Australia's culture.

Management of the coast is complex; with federal, state and local governments and the community all having important parts to play. State Government is responsible for developing policy for conserving and planning coastal land and making decisions that affect management and use of coastal Crown land. Local governments ensure that the State Government's objectives for the coast are addressed through planning schemes. Strategic planning and co-ordination for Melbourne's coasts and bays rest with the Victorian Coastal Council, and the Central Coastal Board is responsible for providing advice about coastal development and management of Melbourne's coast. The community plays an important part in managing and regulating the coast, through locally appointed committees or active involvement and participation in local management activities. The indigenous community also has a strong interest in planning and management of the coast, especially in decisions that affect coastal values and use of coastal resources. Co-ordinating the complex management arrangements for the coast and bays is therefore a vital component of managing Melbourne's open space network.

The coast draws people from all over the metropolitan area. Inner city dwellers, tourists and local residents use the inner city coastline where hard landscaping such as coastal promenades provides durable surfaces for the many thousands of weekly visitors. Coastal facilities in the west (Altona) and south (Frankston) are often more accessible (via arterial road links and public transport) to populations from the northern and eastern metropolitan area than the inner city coastline.

The inner-city areas of Williamstown and St Kilda receive high numbers of visitors all year round, in contrast to the seasonal holiday destinations of Rosebud, Sorrento and Flinders. Because of these seasonal pressures a high level of management is required in order to ensure that open space resources have a long-term future and that provision of facilities is balanced with seasonal demand.

Away from the urban centres, the coast takes on more of a natural appearance including softer trails, and environmental values are stronger. In areas such as Mornington Peninsula, use is concentrated at recreational centres and natural vegetated coastline lies in between. Pressures on these areas are exacerbated during peak holiday periods when Melburnians flock to the coast. Maintaining and protecting these areas is an important focus for the future.

Given the vulnerability of the coastal environment, renovation and rationalisation of existing facilities will be explored before consideration is given to developing new facilities.

Use of the bays is growing in numbers and complexity as are competing and often conflicting commercial and recreational activities. Port Phillip Bay accommodates one of the busiest commercial ports in the southern hemisphere. Recreational boating is very popular, and includes fishing, water skiing, driving personal watercraft, diving, sailing or just cruising. Boat ramps dot the coastline of both bays, but most access is from the north-eastern areas of Port Phillip Bay. These areas (Williamstown, Port Melbourne, St Kilda, Brighton and Sandringham) also contain the greatest concentration of privately moored boats in marinas.

The commercial or tourist craft are the bays "public transport". They include tour ferries; fishing, diving and tour-cruise boats, and hire boats. In Port Phillip, they mostly originate from the Yarra River, and in the south at Sorrento, Portsea and Queenscliff, where numbers increase during the peak holiday season. In Western Port, tour boats are found at Hastings and San Remo, and are usually associated with fishing and seal watching.

Developing a better understanding of access, usage patterns and recreational trends is central to improving the way the bays and foreshores are managed. In conjunction with key user groups and community agencies, the Government is developing more-detailed knowledge about who is using the bay and how. In doing so, we will be better able to determine what new facilities might be needed and where we will also be better able to respond to new and different pressures so that the natural resource's long-term viability is not compromised.

WATERWAYS

The major waterways and river corridors of greater Melbourne are a significant component of the overall open space network. These linear corridors support environmental values and water-catchment functions, and are landscape settings for a range of recreational opportunities within adjacent parklands and trail networks. In recent years, this multiple-use role has been extended even more through a renewed and expanded focus on water-based activity along the major waterways, especially on the navigable reaches of the lower Yarra, Maribyrnong and Patterson rivers.

The major waterways accommodate a range of public and private club-based and commercial activities, including ferries, sports events, festivals, fishing and recreational boating. The mouth of the Yarra River also supports significant commercial-shipping movements. Inevitably, these various uses result in conflict as users compete for river access at peak times.

Due to the recent re-focus of Melbourne as being a bayside city, the profile and level of emphasis on the role of inner-city waterways and their contribution to open space have been raised. The waterways are not only venues for recreational activity; they facilitate important linkages to tourism and recreation destinations along their lengths and around the bay. Whereas the Yarra River is experiencing considerable increase in use and demand, the lower Maribyrnong River remains an under-used resource that has the potential to accommodate significant growth in terms of both diversifying opportunities on the waterway itself and providing links to other venues located on the Yarra and around the bay.

The Patterson River is also an important waterway that supports water-based activity. The role of the river is mainly focused on its popularity as a boating gateway to Port Phillip Bay. It supports a diverse range of water-based recreation activities at the National Water Sports Centre. It also has a significant part to play in featuring safe bay access for the communities on the peninsula as well as residents in the northern and eastern suburbs.

Other important waterways include but are not limited to the Werribee River, Darebin Creek, Plenty River, Merri Creek, Skeleton Creek, Kororoit Creek, Dandenong Creek and Kananook Creek. These waterways support a variety of functions, including protection of natural values and habitat corridors, trail linkages, and recreational opportunities.

CONSERVATION VALUES

Open space protects many features of scientific and cultural interest, from heritage sites to geological formations. Areas of open space with native vegetation help shape Melbourne's landscape character and contribute to a sense of cultural identity. Many cultural landscapes, such as those painted by 19th century artists are protected in parks. Open space also provides a place for residents of an urban city to connect with the environment and participate in its management.

Vegetated areas of open space are also important to the health of our city. Vegetation acts as a carbon sink, which helps mitigate against greenhouse gas effects. Open space adjacent to waterways acts as a habitat corridor for wildlife and can assist in the maintenance of water quality. Parks on the urban fringe, such as Yarra Ranges National Park, also provide valuable water catchment areas for Melbourne's drinking water.

Figure 2. Rare and Threatened Species in Melbourne's Open Space

| Total number of native fauna species | Endangered or rare threatened native fauna species | Total number of native flora species | Endangered or rare threatened native flora species | Number listed under the FFG Act 1988 | Sites listed under the Ramsar International treaty on wetlands |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 600 | 166 | 1600 | 233 | 55 animals 32 plants 5 plant communities | 3 |

Source: Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment Strategy, August 1997.

The greater Melbourne area is environmentally diverse; refer to Figure 2 on page 15. The region supports a variety of habitats, from the bay and coastal areas, through lowland grasslands, to the tall open forests of the protected water-supply catchments. Increasingly, the importance of urban open space for conservation values is being recognised by the community, and in many cases these values are improving. Coastal wetlands such as Cheetham Wetlands, Point Cook Coastal Park and the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands are highly valued for their unique flora and for the important part they play in supporting migratory-bird species. Wetlands also feature outstanding educational opportunities and are important for treating polluted urban run-off.

Larger parks such as Kinglake National Park, Dandenong Ranges National Park, Warrandyte State Park, Yarra Valley Parklands, Plenty Gorge Parklands, Yarra Bend Park and Mornington Peninsula National Park play a major part in supporting biodiversity values throughout the region. Areas such as the Craigieburn Grasslands and the Cooper Street Grasslands play an important part in protecting significant grassland communities. Habitat corridors along streams, including the Yarra, and Maribyrnong rivers, and portions of Moonee Ponds Creek, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek, Diamond Creek and Watson's Creek, link larger parks and important habitats.

Species of state and national significance, including the Helmeted Honeyeater, Orange-bellied Parrot, Swift Parrot, Striped Legless Lizard and Brush-tailed Phascogale, are found within Melbourne's open space network. So, too, are numerous species of mammal such as wallabies, bandicoots, bats and koalas.

Threats to the natural values of urban open space include fragmentation of vegetation corridors, invasion by pest species, visitor pressure, vandalism, and changes to natural regimes such as drainage and fire. These threats exist throughout Melbourne, and their effects are often incremental. Susceptibility to these threats is highest in the inner-suburban areas.

Throughout Linking People and Spaces, we deal with conservation issues as being an integral part of each region. The report, however, focused on the following four main elements related to conservation:

- Supporting implementation of detailed environmental priorities as set out in other plans such as Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy, the Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment Strategy and the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan
- Promoting co-operative management by land managers and private landowners, and increasing public awareness and support in order to address key threats to the conservation values of Melbourne's open space
- Ensuring that environmental and conservation values are carefully considered in all planning and management decisions, including recognising the long-term nature of conservation and revegetation works
- Supporting actions aimed at protecting and improving natural values based on four objectives:
 - managing and maintaining existing remnant vegetation in good condition
 - improving degraded areas of remnant vegetation in open space
 - improving and developing vegetation corridors between areas of large remnant vegetation
 - including under-represented vegetation communities in new open space proposals where possible, in order to continue securing their viability and protection.

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL VALUES

Many Aboriginal cultural sites, places and relics have been identified in the metropolitan area and are formally 'registered' by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. Other sites are known to Aboriginal people, and many places have considerable significance because of their association with Aboriginal traditions.

Aboriginal people have a holistic view of the landscape, whereby a region's natural and cultural values are viewed as being inseparably interwoven within social, cultural, economic and legal frameworks of Aboriginal custom and tradition. Many areas within Melbourne's parks, reserves and open spaces are of cultural importance because of their location (known trade or migration routes along rivers, creeks or on the bay) or their features (dunes, wetlands, lakes).

Melbourne's cultural landscapes are part of a rich tapestry of parks and reserves. These landscapes are far from static, and have been shaped by the ways in which European settlers and Aboriginal people have lived and interacted with the land over time. Increasing awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal history and the cultural landscape is central to developing greater community understanding for these values and the part that Melbourne's parks play in protecting them.

The significance of cultural values or sites might not be readily apparent to the untrained eye, and their identification and protection are a high priority. It is important that open space managers recognise and respect these cultural values and build strong partnerships and effective ongoing relationships with Aboriginal communities.

It is equally important that managers be aware of legislative responsibilities related to the protection of Aboriginal cultural-heritage sites. There are two key pieces of legislation in which formal mechanisms are provided for protecting Aboriginal cultural-heritage in Victoria; The Federal *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* and the Victorian *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservations Act 1972*.

Open space managers will continue to work in co-operation with Aboriginal communities to develop site-protection plans for cultural-heritage sites. Consultation with Aboriginal communities will be an integral component of planning processes related to Melbourne's open space network.

POST CONTACT HERITAGE VALUES

Many of the metropolitan parks and open spaces contain places or objects of cultural-heritage significance. A number of these places are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, the Homestead and stables (Point Cook Coastal Park), the former Humes Pipe Works (Pipe Makers Park) and Wattle Park. Many of these sites have statutory recognition in local planning schemes through heritage overlays or are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

In the Victorian Heritage Register, places and objects, that have the highest level of cultural-heritage significance to the State of Victoria are listed. Once listed, they are protected under the *Heritage Act 1995*, which is administered by Heritage Victoria. One of the main purposes of the Act is registration of these places. Heritage places can include things such as buildings, precincts, trees, gardens, industrial structures and machinery, archaeological sites, moveable historical objects associated with heritage places and cemeteries. Shipwrecks and maritime archaeological sites are also protected.

Heritage Victoria maintains two statutory lists; the Victorian Heritage Register, in which all types of places considered to be of cultural-heritage significance are listed and the Heritage Inventory, in which only archaeological sites and relics are listed. Under the Act all non-aboriginal archaeological sites in Victoria that are older than 50 years are protected, whether or not they are recorded by Heritage Victoria.

Metropolitan parks and open space areas attract a diverse range of visitors for a variety of uses and activities. The challenge now is to manage the range of competing uses within the parks and open spaces without impacting on the recognised cultural-heritage values. This is a significant role for land managers and one whereby they are required to be aware of recognised heritage values and to find a balance between these competing activities. To assist in management of cultural-heritage sites the Victorian Heritage Council initiated the preparation of the Victorian Heritage Strategy 2000–2005, which deals with identification, conservation and use of Victoria's valuable heritage assets.



A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

THE VISION

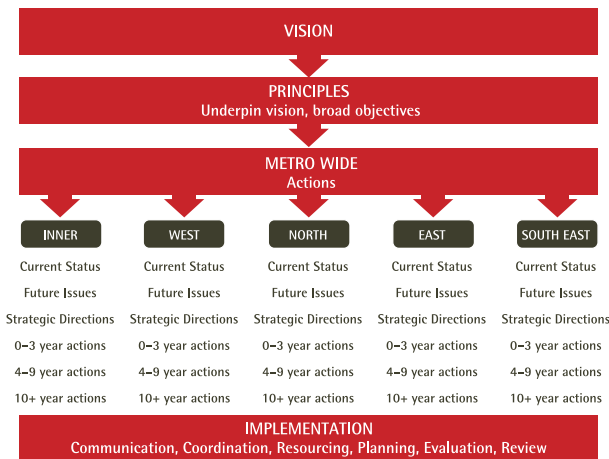
Can you imagine Melbourne's urban environment without sufficient parklands and open spaces for all...without well-developed and maintained trails linking parks and places of attraction...without green corridors linking and protecting valuable habitat...without access to the bay, our spectacular coastline or our famous city waterways?

As a result of a long history of strategic forward planning, Melbourne has a world-class open space network of regional parks, shared-use trails, coasts and bays, and areas of high environmental and cultural value. This legacy, planned and implemented over more than a century, is now embedded in the city's landscape and character and in the values of our community.

However, our parks represent more than this. The values of parks are reflected in the social benefits of health and well-being, in the environmental benefits of protecting conservation and biodiversity values, and in economic returns arising either directly or indirectly from tourism, education, health, transport and leisure industries. Continuing to protect, improve and extend the network is therefore essential to the healthy functioning of our urban environment and lifestyle.

The goal for the Victorian Government is not only to protect this legacy but to ensure that open space becomes an integral part of our urban communities to be enjoyed and appreciated by existing and future generations. In the following section we provide the framework and outline the actions required in order to ensure that this vision is realised, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. *Linking People and Spaces Framework.*



Central to the vision are the principles and objectives of partnerships, equity, diversity, flexibility and sustainability. In *Linking People and Spaces* we recognise that a view to the future is vital when planning and building today. To meet the needs and aspirations of future generations, it is necessary to take action now.





A linked network of open
space for all to enjoy as
part of everyday life,
preserved and enhanced
into the future.

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

PARTNERSHIPS

In this principle we highlight the need to forge effective partnerships between Government and non-Government land management agencies, local government, education and research institutions, and the broader metropolitan community in order to facilitate complementary management of the metropolitan open space network. To do this, solutions will have to be developed based on agreed priorities and community consultation. Through partnerships best value from resources dedicated to open space management will be maximised, and provisions to ensure that broader social goals, including access and equity, will be addressed.

Volunteers contribute to protecting and improving Melbourne's open space network. Continuing to promote and support this involvement will result in effective partnerships with local communities through which everyone benefits.

Objectives

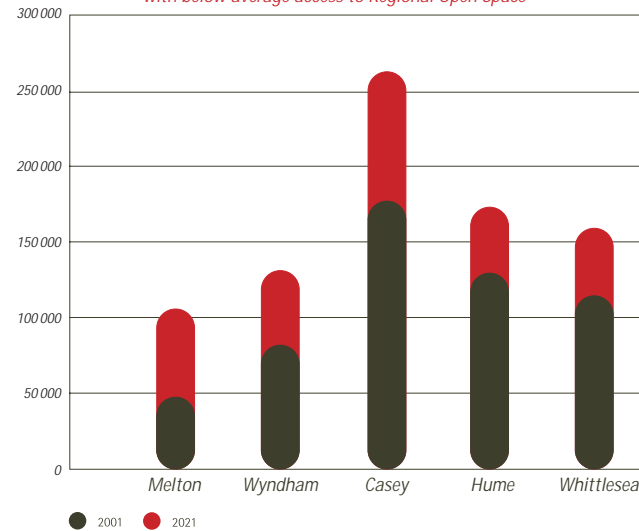
- To maximise best value from resources invested in Melbourne's open space through forging creative partnerships
- To aid partnerships and consultation by involving local communities and volunteers

EQUITY OF ACCESS

The existing distribution of metropolitan open space is not equal for all residents. In the future, the extent of inner-city redevelopment and outward growth will exacerbate this situation. Even if some urban consolidation occurs, Melbourne's fringe population will continue to grow.

According to park-visitor surveys conducted by Parks Victoria, 60 per cent of metropolitan park visitors will usually travel up to only 15 kilometres to access and enjoy a regional metropolitan park. Based on the existing distribution of Melbourne's parklands, having seven parks within a 15 kilometre drive is considered to be a good level of access for Melbourne residents. In Map 3 on page 21 we show residential access to regional open space.

Figure 4. Predicted population growth for Local Government Areas with below average access to Regional Open Space



Three regions: West, North and South East, include areas that have a below average-supply of parklands. In Figure 4 we show that these areas that have an under-supply of regional open space are also areas of predicted population growth. Due to the high level of population growth predicted in these areas, the existing inequity in the distribution of Melbourne's open space will worsen in Melbourne's south-eastern, northern and western growth corridors over the next 20 years unless additional parks are provided.

These areas are the main focus of new park investigations. There will be better and more cost-effective results if planning is undertaken early. This includes identifying future metropolitan open space needs and opportunities now and incorporating better design practices in the design and layout of new urban areas. These parks will be a part of meeting future generations needs.

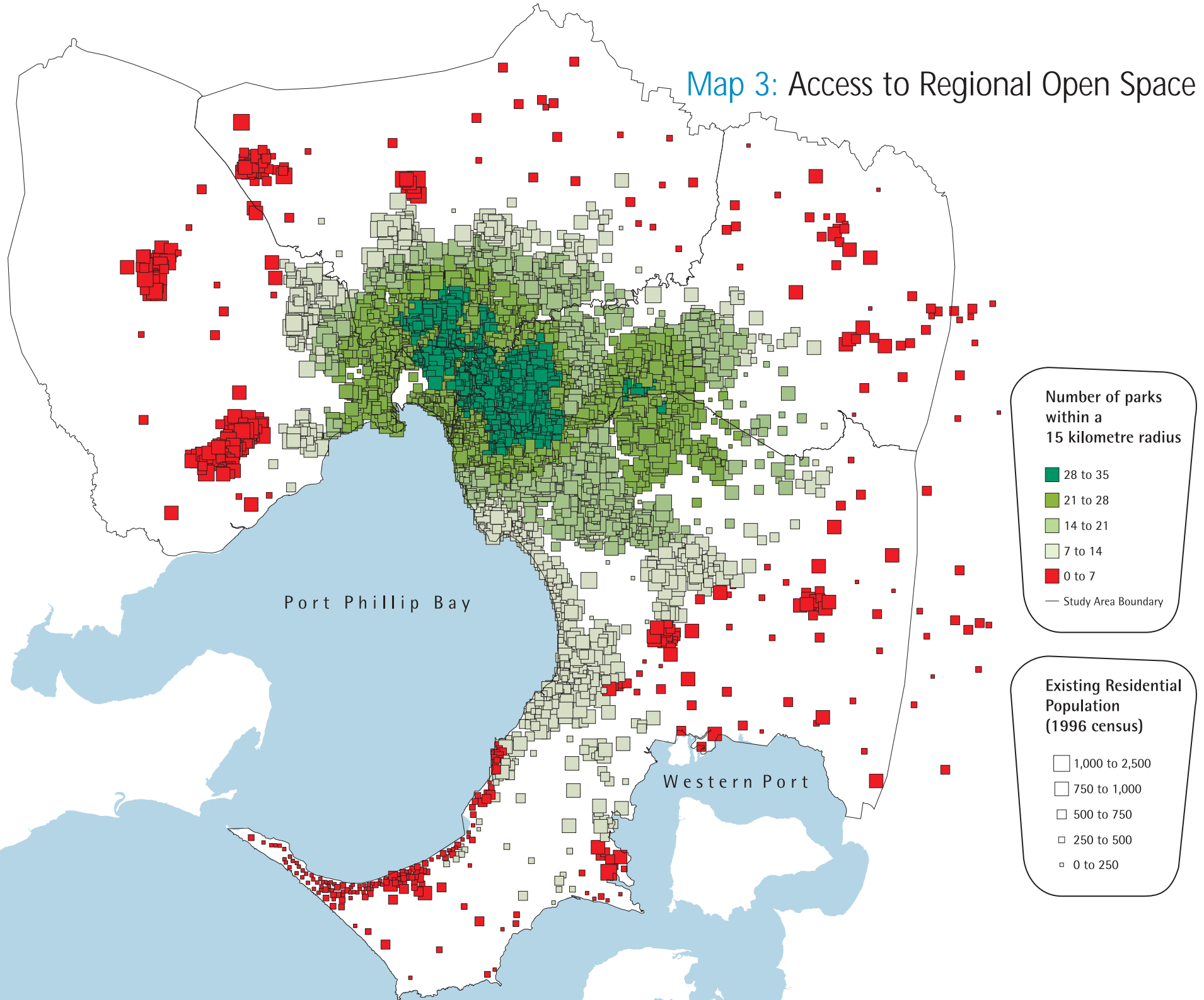
As people move back to established suburbs, existing open space will experience new and varied pressure associated with increased levels and changing patterns of use. Meeting this demand will require innovation and imagination in order to capitalise on under-used open space and derelict land such as waste-treatment facilities, waterfronts, service and infrastructure corridors, parking lots, and de-commissioned industrial land. Changes to future management will be necessary and might include developing more-durable facilities at various sites to accommodate greater use, and permitting multiple use of some sites and different patterns of use, such as 24-hour access. Ensuring that regional open space is well connected to neighbouring open space so that people's choices are widened, will also be a key feature of the strategy.

Future development of open space, especially where it involves a change in use or excision to parkland, will have to entail significant community benefits and be subject to appropriate public consultation within the local and wider community. There should be no net reduction in open space as a consequence of any development or redevelopment. The goals are to increase the availability of open space for everyone, and ensure equitable access for all areas of Melbourne.

Objectives

- To improve equity of access to open space throughout Melbourne
- To maximise community awareness, use and benefits of open space
- To plan for future open space needs in order to guarantee equitable access for future generations
- To ensure there is no net loss of open space.

Map 3: Access to Regional Open Space



DIVERSITY

Diversity can apply to many components of open space, be it environmental, landscape and cultural values, the layout and design of recreational settings, and naturally, the needs and values of the community that uses it.

In much of the existing network, the diverse landscape and geological features of Melbourne's landscape are captured and reflected. The challenge will be to ensure the continued protection of diverse environmental values and to progressively increase under-represented vegetation communities in future open space. In protecting cultural values, especially indigenous culture, the varied experiences, meanings and benefits that can be attached to the landscape will be enhanced.

Increasing diversity in modern lifestyles is influencing people's expectations for leisure opportunities. More than ever before, people are being exposed to a greater range of leisure opportunities and to competition between indoor and outdoor and public and private experiences. Rather than view parklands as being areas traditionally isolated from other leisure activities such as shopping centres, we believe that strong linkages and better transition to many parks and open areas have to be developed in order to make open space more relevant to more people. The traditional large parkland model could be accompanied with networks of smaller diverse areas of open space that are well connected by a range of transport corridors, including bicycle and walking trails and public transport. Connections will be strengthened to the bay and our waterways through shared-use trails, ferries and recreational craft, which will also facilitate linkages and access to other key tourism and recreational destinations.

Due to changing employment structures, declining household sizes and the fact that more people are living on less land at higher densities, easily accessible local open space is set to become a central part of local communities. Like the 'village green', these places will be where people of all ages congregate for informal recreation and relaxation on a daily basis.

Some of the key factors that will influence the way Melburnians use open space in the future are listed as follows:

- The population is ageing and growing at a slower rate. The number of people older than 60 is predicted to have risen from 16 per cent of the population in 1996 to 23 per cent in 2021.
- There is a continuing decline in household size so that increasing numbers of dwellings are required for the same population. In 1996, the average household size was 2.68 people, which by 2021 is projected to have declined to 2.34 people. This change will most likely lead to more people living in medium-density accommodation that contains minimal private open space.
- There is increasing competition for leisure time. Personal computers and entertainment systems, and public and private leisure providers all compete for leisure time.
- Changing employment structures and working hours will influence the way people interact with open space. Increasingly, people are becoming able to work flexible hours, work from home and job share.
- There are changing social values, including greater awareness of safety, health and environmental issues. More than ever before, people are becoming aware of the health benefits associated with walking, riding or jogging as well as the environmental benefits of having quality open space.

According to community-perception monitoring undertaken by Parks Victoria in 1999, 86 per cent of people residing in Melbourne felt very well served by Melbourne's metropolitan open spaces, and that 87 per cent felt that the recreational opportunities available in parks were very good. At the same time researchers indicate that the community is seeking greater diversity in the range of open space on offer. Emerging demands include:

- improved linear links to surrounding areas, parks and attractions
- open spaces that cater for multiple use, including less structured activities, as well as open space that caters for all age groups
- open space that caters for people from different ethnic backgrounds
- greater protection and enhancement of environmental and cultural values
- improved safety and security in parks and open spaces.

Melbourne is generally viewed as being Australia's most culturally diverse city. Many of the city's ethnic groups interact with open space in different ways and sometimes seek quite different experiences and opportunities, such as cultural and religious festivities, picnics with larger groups and entertaining overseas visitors.

The implications of these factors have to be understood in order to ensure that open space managers are responsive in providing services, information and facilities that are relevant to community expectations and needs.

Objectives

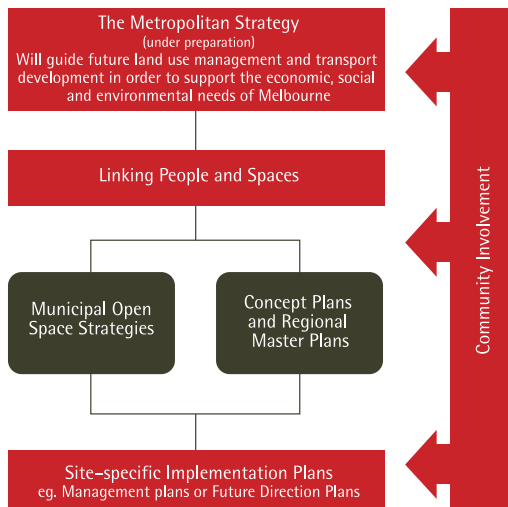
- To protect and enhance a diversity of representative environmental, landscape and cultural values
- To provide for a diversity of recreational opportunities in response to our multicultural society and to changing community structure, needs and value

FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Due to people's increasing awareness of health, safety and environmental issues, their expectations for provision of quality open space continue to rise. Adoption of barrier-free design practices will result in accommodation of a diverse range of user groups, including people who have varying levels of mobility and who are from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the broad public-consultation process associated with adoption of this Strategy, developing strategies for local open space plans and for management of regional metropolitan parks will lead to more opportunities for local and wider community involvement. Ongoing and detailed input from local communities will be an integral part of all planning processes, as outlined in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Planning Arrangements for Metropolitan Open Space



The State Government, through Parks Victoria, provides one avenue for financial assistance to local communities and local government. This Strategy will contain the framework for developing complementary programs in order to reinforce and support the network of metropolitan open space.

Through forums for discussing metropolitan open space, formal partnerships will be augmented. These forums will be an opportunity for open space managers to share information and develop common approaches to problem solving. They will be an aid to developing a co-operative approach to planning and management and to harnessing the collective resources and thinking of everyone who is responsible for planning and managing open space.

Objectives

- To promote discussion, creativity and innovation in better understanding and responding to current and future leisure trends and community values
- To involve the community in planning for open space and thereby ensure that current needs and future trends are considered

SUSTAINABILITY

Linking People and Spaces contains the basis for setting future priorities, developing and maintaining partnerships, and allocating funding for the benefit of the whole community.

Protecting and enhancing conservation values, including indigenous vegetation and habitats, is central to environmental sustainability. Expanding protected areas and improving links between habitat corridors will be a part of the overall viability of conservation values. Assessments of the potential environmental and social impacts will be incorporated in feasibility assessments for new open space developments. Adoption of environmentally sensitive and sustainable design and construction techniques will also be a part of protecting conservation values.

A well-planned network of open space, that is integrated in broader metropolitan planning is socially responsible and more likely to be enjoyed and supported by the whole community. Supporting a shift to more sustainable transport trends for Melbourne will entail a range of solutions by government, including facilitating cycling and walking opportunities through provision of a network of shared trails. The location of future parklands must also reflect the anticipated growth areas and rates of growth in order to ensure that the parklands are relevant to the changing shape of the metropolitan area and the aspirations of a changing community.

Revenue from the Parks Charge (levied on Melbourne residents and businesses) represents one source of funding that will continue to be a contribution to maintenance and development of the network of metropolitan open space. In addition, State and local governments have ongoing commitments to acquire parklands located along Melbourne's rivers and creeks. Areas earmarked for future parkland but still in private ownership are shown as a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) in the relevant local planning scheme.

These long-term commitments have been locked into Planning Schemes through public consultation. Since 1988, approximately \$34.6 million has been spent on acquiring an additional 2,477 hectares of open space in the metropolitan area. Progressively, as landowners decide to sell, the open space network will continue to be expanded through this scheme.

Land can also be committed to parkland on a site-by-site basis when areas of land are developed or redeveloped. In some cases this commitment might be on a cost-neutral basis where mutual benefit can be achieved, whereas in other cases the usual acquisition processes apply. Forging partnerships with local government and developers is crucial in implementing these opportunities to add to the park estate. Opportunities might also arise to negotiate access to land, that might not otherwise be available for acquisition but is crucial for linkages or recreational opportunities.

Funding must compete with other Government priorities and be fully justified. The Government is committed to taking a financially responsible approach to planning parklands. Each investment must be justified according to need, value and usage, bearing in mind not only capital costs but costs of maintaining assets such as trails, car parks, picnic areas, toilets and bridges. Forward planning is required in order to ensure that investments are matched to capacity and priorities.

Objectives

- To maximise the viability of conservation values by expanding and linking protected areas under public ownership
- To ensure that development of open space reflects best practice in environmentally sensitive design, construction and maintenance
- To plan for future open space needs in order to ensure cost effective, affordable and timely investment

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

To achieve the vision and objectives outlined in this strategy more than 150 specific actions and priorities have been identified. In the following section, we identify these actions in order to provide direction for open space managers to assist in allocating funds and to giving emphasis to meeting the communities immediate and long-term open space needs. Actions have been prioritised into more immediate needs (*one to three years*), medium term actions (*four to nine years*) and actions that have a longer term focus (*ten plus years*). Actions have been divided into metropolitan wide actions, which are relevant to the entire network, and five broad regions in order to provide a geographical basis for implementation. In drawing the geographical boundaries, we recognised overlaps in open space values and haven't sought to diminish key interrelationships between regions for trail linkages and habitat corridors. The regions are not based on proposed or existing administrative boundaries.

However, *Linking People and Spaces* is not a master plan for specifying facilities' design and location, and in many cases feasibility assessments will be required, especially for new trail alignments. Conservation actions are consistent with recommendations in other relevant documents, such as Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy, Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy and the draft Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan. Coastal actions have been developed in accordance with the Victorian Coastal Strategy.

Agencies responsible for delivering each action have been identified. Many of the actions are the responsibility of more than one agency, and it is important that these actions be delivered in partnership. The lead agency is designated in red initials and partnership agencies in orange.

The responsible agency nominated for each action is identified in the following way:

Parks Victoria **PV**
 Department of Natural Resources and Environment **DNRE**
 Melbourne Water **MW**
 Vic Roads **VR**
 Committee of Management **CoM**
 Local Government **LG**
 Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne **RBGC**
 Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board **CALP**
 Department of Infrastructure **DOI**
 Melbourne Port Corporation **MPC**
 Docklands Authority **DA**
 Bicycle Victoria **BV**

METROPOLITAN WIDE ACTIONS

Melbourne's wider metropolitan area reflects a diversity of open space elements. Nevertheless it is possible to highlight a number of broad actions for managing and planning the network, and the actions apply generally across this diverse geographic area. Regionally specific actions are outlined against five regions: Inner, West, North, East and South East thereby covering the Melbourne area.

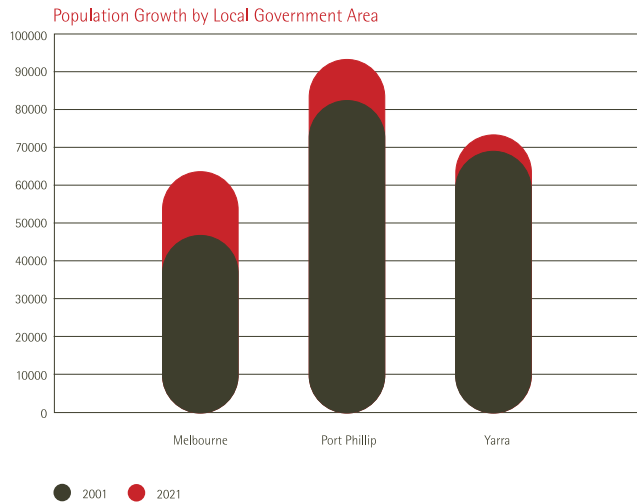
- Amend the Victorian Planning Provisions to include the strategy as a referenced document in the State Planning Policy Framework under the open space section. **DOI, PV**
- Conduct annual open space forums for land managers to assist in developing co-operative and creative approaches to planning and management of Melbourne's open space network. **PV**
- Ensure that *Linking People and Spaces* is available online at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au and develop links to relevant policies, strategies and funding programs. **PV**
- Develop signage guidelines for the Metropolitan Trail Network. **BV, PV**

- Implement a five year prioritised program for review of Future Directions Plans for Parks Victoria managed metropolitan regional parks. **PV**
- Protect areas of indigenous and post-contact cultural-heritage in accordance with the relevant legislative framework. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Foster community appreciation for, and awareness of, environmental and cultural values within the open space network through interpretation and involvement in planning for open space. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Support community and volunteer involvement in the planning and management of the open space network. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Promote involvement of Melbourne's multicultural community in the planning, development and management of the open space network. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Implement a co-ordinated "Urban Biolinks" program to connect, revegetate gaps and improve habitat condition in strategic wildlife corridors, focusing on key waterways and other priority corridors identified in the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Investigate environmental treatments of water in public open space in order to create wetland environments and enhance amenity values. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Promote use of sustainable environmental design principles in the development and management of open space. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Ensure that any new facilities and developments are coastal dependent or related to coastal dependent uses. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Provide appropriate recreational facilities at key nodes around Port Phillip Bay. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Conduct more research and promote the social, environmental and economic benefits derived by users of open space. **LG, PV**
- Ensure that new open space developments include assessments of social, environmental and economic impacts. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Reserve future parkland acquired by the State Government, under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* or other relevant legislation in order to ensure its long-term protection. **DNRE**
- Review the adequacy of land currently identified for future parklands in relation to current and future demand for recreation opportunities and for protection of environmental values. **PV**





INNER



Location of Inner Region within the study area

OVERVIEW

Gardens are a Victorian icon, and the inner Melbourne area is well serviced with extensive parks and gardens that circle the city. These areas are supported by a comprehensive but ageing trail system that radiates out to link a myriad of inner suburban parks, beaches, gardens and sports grounds. This region encompasses the heart of Melbourne and the city's tourism and sporting hub. As a result the open space network in the region is mostly complete and is well maintained to manage the millions of annual visits from both metropolitan residents and tourists.

Existing open space offer contains a wide range of facilities and recreation opportunities from the formal Botanic Gardens and the inner city park Birrarung Marr to the natural bushland at Yarra Bend Park. Parks such as these and the Yarra River hold great cultural significance for Melbourne. Waterways and the coastal foreshore also comprise key elements of the inner open space network, including the popular St Kilda Foreshore precinct. There is considerable infrastructure on the Yarra and coastline, which facilitates access to these features. The region encompasses the municipalities of Melbourne, Port Phillip and Yarra.

FUTURE ISSUES

Due to the region's many visitors and activities, conflict between users inevitably exists and require management.

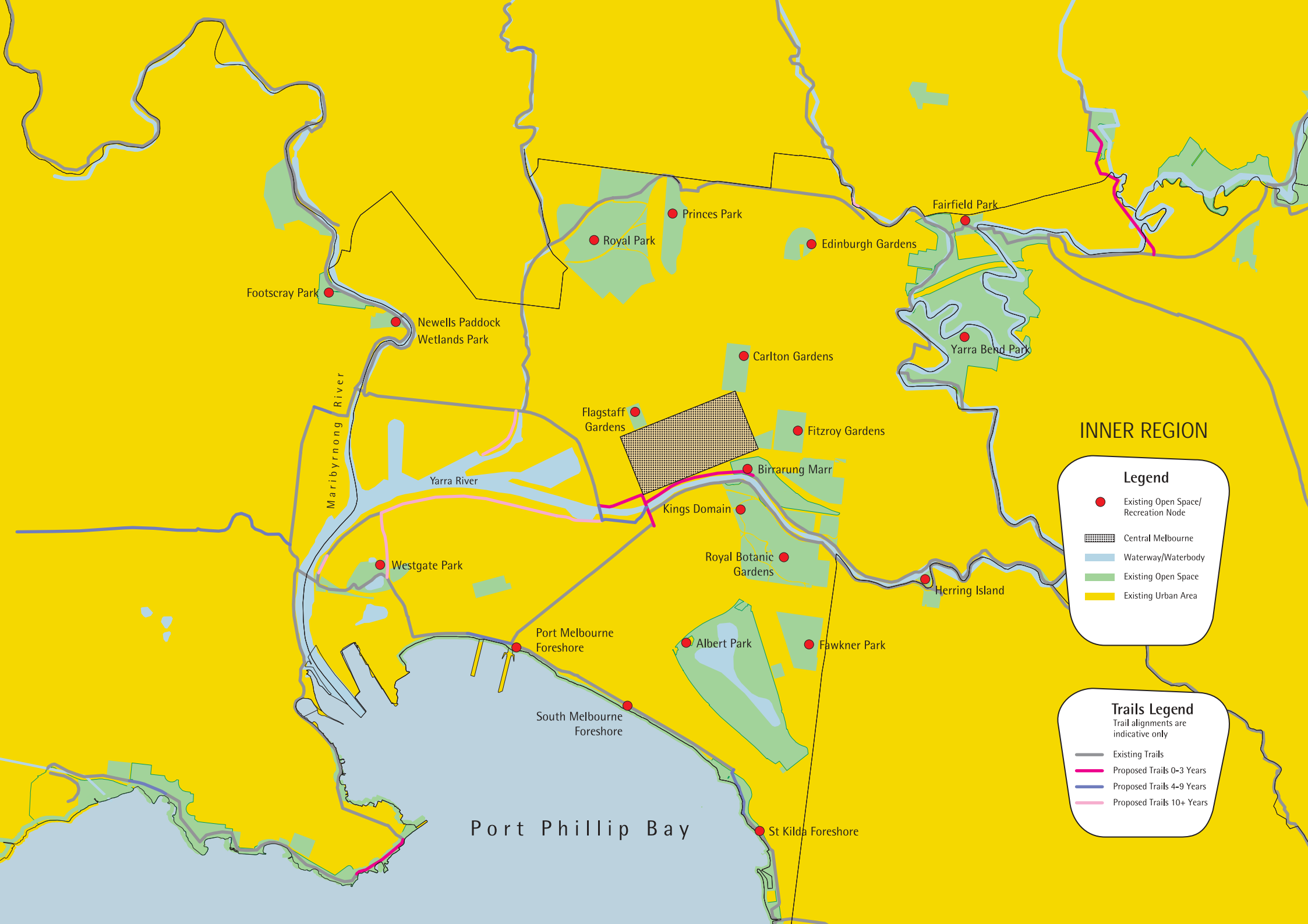
Given that such an established open space network exists in the region, the main themes for the future are managing high demand and potential conflict, and maintaining existing infrastructure in order to meet increased demand pressures. Comparing the relative needs of all areas, other regions are in greater need of expanded open space facilities, but increasing levels of use by residents and visitors are a strong impetus for improving waterway facilities and the quality of existing visitor infrastructure.

The Docklands development will significantly contribute to growth in Melbourne's population. This inner city development will not only enhance Melbourne's image as a waterfront city even more, it will cater for both local and metropolitan open space needs. Integrating this development with adjacent land and water based links will be a priority.

Future boat mooring developments along the Yarra River will have significant demand implications for river and bay infrastructure. In 2006, Melbourne will host the Commonwealth Games, whereby more demand will be placed on the need for land and water-based infrastructure to be upgraded along the river corridor.

Due to the region's ageing trail infrastructure and very high commuter and recreational use, trail maintenance is a safety issue and therefore a management priority, as is closing the gaps in the major trail systems.

Environmental values in comparison to those of other regions are less intact and are concentrated in the larger reserves and waterways, so it is important to maintain and enhance habitat corridors in these areas.



INNER REGION

Legend

- Existing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- Central Melbourne
- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area

Trails Legend
Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years

- Footscray Park
- Newells Paddock Wetlands Park
- Royal Park
- Princes Park
- Edinburgh Gardens
- Fairfield Park
- Carlton Gardens
- Yarra Bend Park
- Flagstaff Gardens
- Fitzroy Gardens
- Birrarung Marr
- Kings Domain
- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Herring Island
- Westgate Park
- Port Melbourne Foreshore
- Albert Park
- Fawkner Park
- South Melbourne Foreshore
- St Kilda Foreshore

Maribyrnong River

Yarra River

Port Phillip Bay

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The requirements for the region's priorities are as follows.

- Developing diversity in recreational opportunities at land and water destinations, and ensuring effective land and water-based links beyond the region
- Assessing site capacity and managing conflicting uses in parks, on coastal strips, on waterways and at tourism destinations
- Providing facilities in the bay to cater for water-based visitors, including providing appropriate berthing facilities at tourism destinations, and when possible, forging partnerships with private marinas to facilitate public access
- Closing the gaps in existing trails, and forging partnerships with local government and residential developers in order to create new links to open space facilities
- Implementing management actions for native vegetation in line with the priorities set by the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan.

0–3 YEAR ACTIONS

- Upgrade and develop infrastructure and enhance landscape values along the Lower Yarra River in order to support its recreation, sporting and tourism use, and its role as a prominent venue for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. **PV, LG, MW, DOI**
- Enhance trail and water-based linkages between Birrarung Marr and tourism destinations within the precinct. **LG, PV, DOI**
- Implement the Northbank Promenade Concept Plan including enhancement of open space opportunities and safe shared-use trail links from Docklands to Birrarung Marr on the north bank. **DOI, LG, PV**
- Continue to protect and enhance habitat values of Royal Park, and establish links with Moonee Ponds Creek corridor and the Melbourne Zoological Gardens. **LG**
- Continue to protect and enhance riparian vegetation and habitat corridor links along the key waterways, including the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers, and the Moonee Ponds and Merri creeks. Ensure complementary management of adjacent open space and parklands. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**

4–9 YEAR ACTIONS

- Commence implementation of the St Kilda foreshore Urban Design Framework, including enhancement of safe access along the public promenade and investigation of development of a safe harbour. **LG, PV, DNRE**
- Promote Westgate Park as a quality inner city parkland, and continue to improve environmental values by addressing water quality issues in the lakes. **PV, LG, MPC**
- Support water-based transit links between tourism destinations along the Lower Yarra River, Docklands, Maribyrnong and the Bay, and balance safety and access with commercial shipping activities in the port zone. **PV, DA, LG**
- Provide appropriate recreational facilities at key coastal activity nodes, and ensure that any new facilities and developments are coastal dependent or related to coastal dependent uses. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Complete critical gaps in the Main Yarra Trail, the Bay Trail along the Port Phillip Foreshore, the Capital City Trail, the Merri Creek Trail and the Maribyrnong River Trail. **LG, PV**
- Enhance the Capital City Trail by completing a link from the Docklands precinct to Southbank and from Charles Grimes Bridge to Clarendon Street on the south bank. **LG**
- Link the Federation Trail to the Maribyrnong River Trail. **LG, VR**

LONGER TERM ACTIONS

- Enhance visitor facilities at Yarra Bend Park as a major inner-Melbourne regional park. **PV**
- Investigate the need and feasibility of creating additional trail linkages across the Yarra River between Charles Grimes Bridge and Bolte Bridge. **LG, DOI**
- Upgrade the Bay Trail from Beacon Road to Westgate Park via the Boulevard and Todd Road. **LG, MPC, PV**
- Complete the gap in the Merri Creek Trail at Rushall Train Station. **LG**
- Establish a trail link from Westgate Park to Southbank via Lorimer Street. **LG**
- Re-align the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail at Docklands in order to link to the south bank of the Yarra. **LG, DA, VR**





WEST

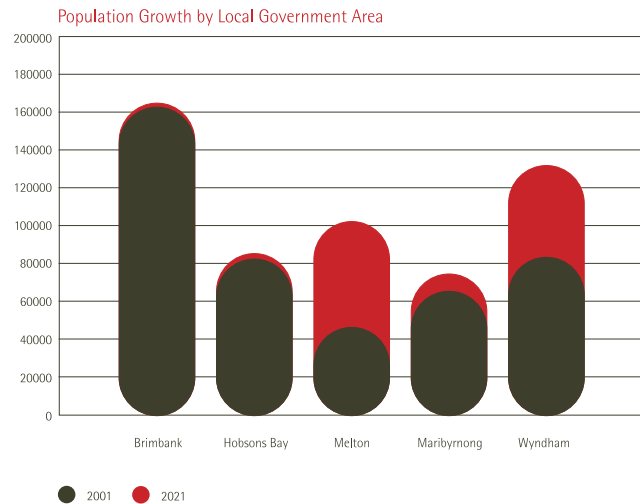
FUTURE ISSUES

Whereas the region's open space distribution tends to be concentrated in the inner and coastal areas, its range of recreational and tourism opportunities has diversified in recent years. However, significant future growth is expected in the areas of Melton and Werribee, where open space is currently limited, and will require identification and development of new open space opportunities. This will necessitate improvement of facilities at existing parks as well as maximising the potential of existing resources and expansion of the overall network through development of new venues.

Action will continue towards implementation of the Williamstown Foreshore and Williamstown Altona Coastal Strategic Direction Plans and associated Master Plans, which includes development of Point Gellibrand Coastal Heritage Park, a new park at the former Altona Tip site, and conversion of the Truganina Explosives Reserve to parkland. An ongoing priority will be protection of environmentally sensitive areas from increased visitor pressure, especially at Point Cook and in marine park areas. Development and enhancement of the Werribee Park region, including the river mouth and beach at Werribee South, as a key recreational activity centre will also continue through implementation of the Werribee Precinct Plan.

Maribyrnong is likely to experience population growth and increased demand for open space, mainly through conversion of former industrial sites to residential communities. The continuing development of the Maribyrnong Valley Regional Parklands will be a significant opportunity to diversify activities, including placing greater emphasis on water-based activities on the river. Links will also thereby be created and access to tourism destinations on the Yarra and around the Bay will be extended.

In the context of increasing water-based use of major rivers and the bay, and establishment of marine parks, facilitating improved water-based access to recreation destinations is a key objective in diversifying available open space. A shared-use trail network exists within the inner and coastal areas. However, there are notable gaps through which the efficiency of the system and its ability to link people to existing centres are compromised. Several trail extensions will be required in future in order to meet demand as population growth and development continues out to the northwest and to link people with new parklands as they are established.



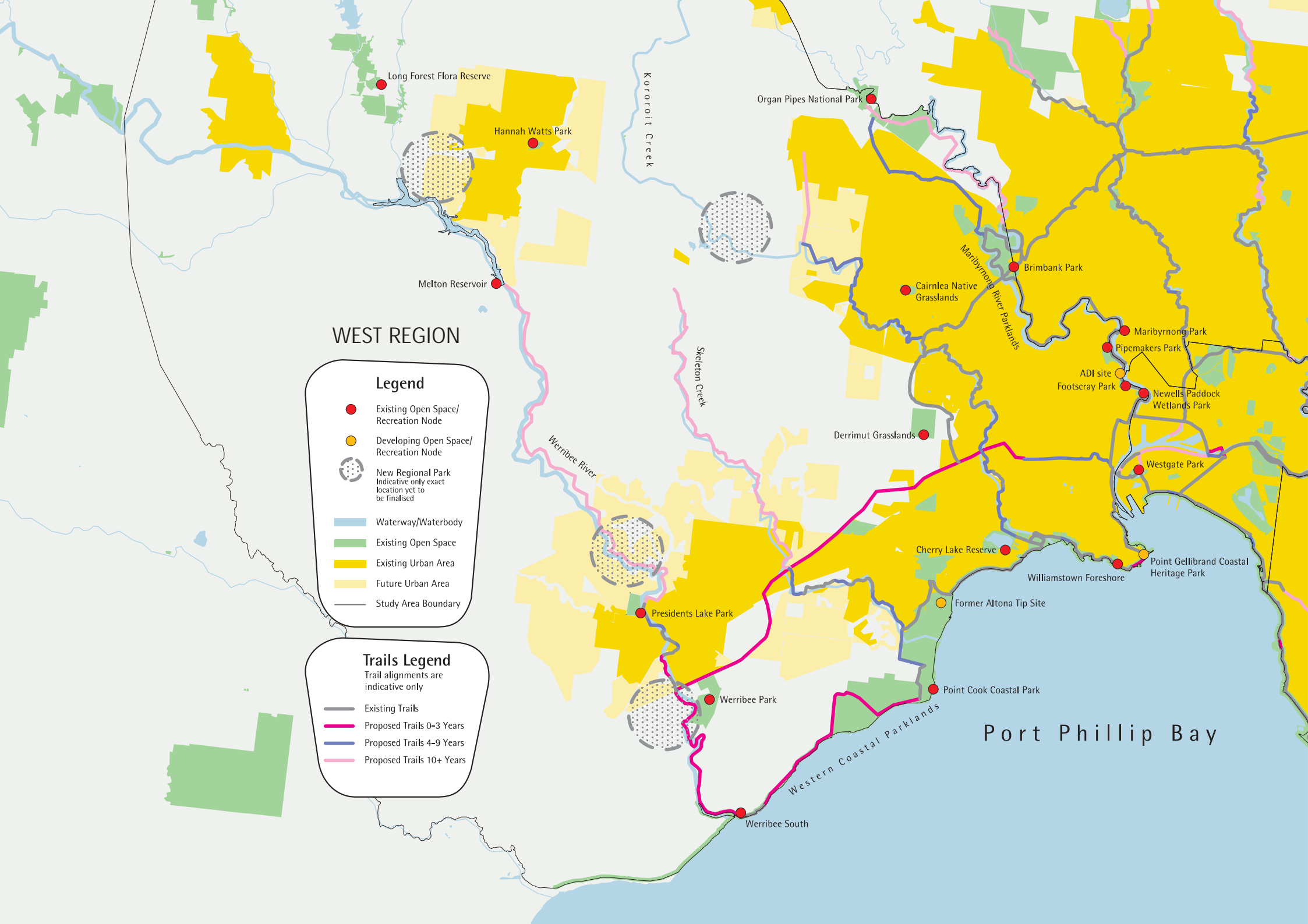
OVERVIEW

The West Region has a visually distinctive landscape of coastal wetlands and extensive basalt plains beyond the coast. It has a diverse range of open space components that support tourism, recreational and conservation values and opportunities. It encompasses the municipalities of Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, Melton and Brimbank.

Most public open space in the region and surrounding areas is in the form of large parks or reserves. The coastline of Port Phillip Bay supports major recreational centres such as Williamstown and Point Cook, and conservation areas of national and international significance such as Cheetham Wetlands. The deeply incised river valleys and more subtle creek lines, wetlands and swamps similarly support high conservation values, including a number of sites of Aboriginal cultural significance. The grassland vegetation communities, although poorly represented and under threat, are representative of highly depleted communities of national botanical significance.



Location of West Region within the study area



WEST REGION

Legend

- Existing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- Developing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- New Regional Park
Indicative only exact location yet to be finalised
- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area
- Future Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Trails Legend

Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years

Long Forest Flora Reserve

Hannah Watts Park

Organ Pipes National Park

Kororoit Creek

Melton Reservoir

Maribyrnong River Parklands

Brimbank Park

Cairnlea Native Grasslands

Skeleton Creek

Maribyrnong Park

Pipemakers Park

ADI site
Footscray Park

Newells Paddock Wetlands Park

Derrimut Grasslands

Werribee River

Westgate Park

Cherry Lake Reserve

Williamstown Foreshore

Point Gellibrand Coastal Heritage Park

Presidents Lake Park

Former Altona Tip Site

Werribee Park

Point Cook Coastal Park

Werribee South

Western Coastal Parklands

Port Phillip Bay

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The requirements for the region's priorities are as follows.

- Ensuring that adequate additional open space is secured in order to meet the demands of growth areas
- Realising the potential of existing parks to meet the needs of currently under-serviced communities
- Protecting environmental values through enhancement works and consolidation of vegetation links between isolated areas
- Diversifying the range of open space opportunities (recreation, tourism, conservation) in the region and developing strong linkages between them
- Implementing native vegetation management actions in line with the priorities set in the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan
- Enhancing access and safety to the bay through provision of facilities at key activity nodes
- Protecting and enhancing significant cultural and historical sites within the region's existing and future open space network.

0–3 YEAR ACTIONS

- Develop a new regional recreation and conservation park along the lower reaches of the Werribee River. **PV, LG**
- Investigate options and define park boundaries for new regional parks at Melton Township, Werribee Township and Caroline Springs. **PV, LG**
- Continue development of Point Gellibrand Coastal Heritage Park. **PV**
- Review the Point Cook Coastal Park Plan in order to investigate opportunities for providing additional recreational facilities and enhancing environmental protection. **PV**
- Investigate the potential for developing additional facilities and attractions at the Werribee Park precinct, thereby promoting the zone as a major tourist, recreation, education and conservation destination. **PV**
- For new areas of open space, when possible, give priority to protection of Grassland and Coastal Grassy Woodland vegetation communities. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Redevelop the former Port of Melbourne Authority site in Williamstown as a maritime heritage tourist precinct. **PV**
- Protect and restore the depleted Grasslands vegetation community at Derrimut Grasslands, Laverton Grasslands, Organ Pipes National Park and Cairnlea Grasslands. **PV, LG, DNRE, CoM**
- Protect and restore the Coastal Scrub and Grassland vegetation community at Point Cook Coastal Park and Cheetham Wetlands. **PV**
- Protect and enhance riparian vegetation along the waterways including Werribee River, Kororoit Creek, Maribyrnong River and Skeleton Creek. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Increase the cover of depleted Coastal Scrub and Grassland by revegetating the Port Phillip coastline in order to form links between existing sites. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Close gaps in the Bay Trail from the Werribee River Trail to Point Cook Coastal Park, in order to form part of a continuous coastal open space link between Williamstown and Werribee South. **PV, LG**
- Extend the Werribee River Trail from Werribee Park south to the proposed Bay Trail. **PV, LG**



4–9 YEAR ACTIONS

- Commence development of a new regional park along the Upper Kororoit Creek near Caroline Springs to meet existing demand and ensure diversity of recreational opportunity. **PV, LG**
- Establish a new park site at Truganina Explosive Reserve, and complete the development of the new park on the site of the former Altona Tip. **LG**
- Complete the western sector of Newport Lakes Park. **LG**
- Implement the Williamstown Foreshore Master Plan, including reconstruction of Ferguson Street Pier and upgrading of the recreational boating facilities at Gem Pier. **PV**
- Continue negotiations in order to establish new parkland at Edgewater Estate in Footscray, in order to accommodate the needs of an expanding population. **PV**
- Provide appropriate recreational facilities at key coastal activity nodes, thereby ensuring that any new facilities and developments are coastal dependent or related to coastal dependent uses. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**

- Promote development of appropriate public boating facilities, including Werribee and Williamstown. **PV, DNRE**
- Develop landings and wharfs at key destinations on the lower Maribyrnong River in order to increase access and diversify water-based recreation opportunities, including links to tourism destinations on the Yarra and around the bay, in line with the Lower Maribyrnong River Future Directions Plan. **PV**
- Support promotional strategies through which the profile of the Maribyrnong River and adjacent parklands is raised as a recreation and tourism destination. **PV**
- Finalise strategic management plans for Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and the Bellarine Peninsula, and for the Western Port Ramsar sites, and commence implementation. **PV, MW**
- Close key gaps and complete missing links in the Bay Trail and the Werribee River Trail. **LG, PV**
- Complete the Federation Trail to Werribee Township. **VR**
- Link the Federation Trail to the Bay Trail via Skeleton Creek. **LG**
- Close the gaps in the Kororoit Creek Trail. **LG**
- Link Brimbank Park to Organ Pipes National Park via Taylors Creek. **LG**

LONG TERM ACTIONS

- Establish a new regional park near the Melton Township in order to meet demand for recreational opportunities. **PV, LG**
- Establish new parkland around the Werribee growth area in order to meet demand for recreation opportunities. **PV**
- Improve the landscape conditions, public access and public safety at the Campbell's Cove area and provision of casual berths, refuelling and pump-out facilities at Werribee South. **PV, DNRE**
- Extend the Werribee River Trail north to the Melton Township. **LG**
- Extend the Skeleton Creek Trail north of the Federation Trail to Rockbank. **LG**
- Link the Kororoit Creek Trail to the Melton Highway as development occurs. **LG**
- Extend the Maribyrnong River Trail at Brimbank Park to Organ Pipes National Park. **PV, LG**
- Investigate an alternative alignment for the Maribyrnong River Trail from Tea Gardens to Lily Street. **LG**





NORTH

FUTURE ISSUES

The northeast is characterised by large-scale areas of open space along the Yarra River coupled with reasonably high urban growth to the north. Although the larger reserves are in relatively good condition, the region's smaller reserves are often isolated and under considerable pressure from the expanding urban environment.

Over the next 20 years, significant growth is expected in the northern municipalities of Hume and Whittlesea. Meeting the open space needs of these areas will be a focus for the future. The major ecological values are the nationally significant grassland communities of the basalt plains, including the Merri Creek corridor and the large, forested parklands of the Plenty River corridor. Increasing urban development and expected population growth will result in pressure on both these areas.

A major priority for this region is to protect the conservation values contained within the existing open space network by enhancing the riparian vegetation linking them, especially the smaller grassland reserves in the basalt plains. Priorities for revegetation include Plains Grassy Woodlands and Box Ironbark Forest vegetation communities.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The requirements for the region's priorities are as follows.

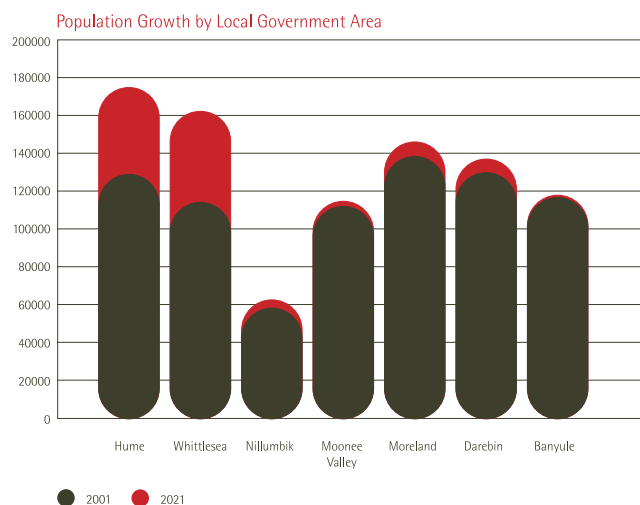
- Establishing new metropolitan parks and recreational nodes in order to meet the demands of future population growth
- Diversifying and enhancing recreational opportunities in the inner northern area in order to cater for a wide range of user groups
- Improving the linkages between areas of existing open space in order to increase access to recreational opportunities
- Extending shared use trails in order to meet current demand for existing populations and more development as user demand increases with population growth
- Implementing management actions in line with the priorities set in the Draft Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan
- Protecting national and State conservation values by sensitively incorporating them into new park proposals.

OVERVIEW

The North Region contains large areas of environmentally significant open space that support a range of recreational opportunities. It is characterised by basalt plains, undulating woodland and forested highland. The region contains a diversity of urban and semi-rural areas and rural townships that have varying levels of population growth. It encompasses the municipalities of Hume, Whittlesea, Nillumbik, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Darebin and Banyule.

The region is well serviced with established parklands in the inner north and urban fringe. In the urban areas, open space tends to be small and occurs along major waterways. Many of the trails run north south, and are located along creeks and rivers thereby linking the areas of open space. The riparian vegetation is in good condition compared with that of other metropolitan regions, so these corridors are significant habitat and vegetation links.

The region already has significant programs in progress, related to developing and promoting existing parklands such as Brimbank Park and Horseshoe Bend Farm, Greenvale Reservoir, Broadmeadows Valley Park, Organ Pipes National Park, Bundoora Park and Plenty Gorge Parklands.



Location of North Region within the study area

NORTH REGION

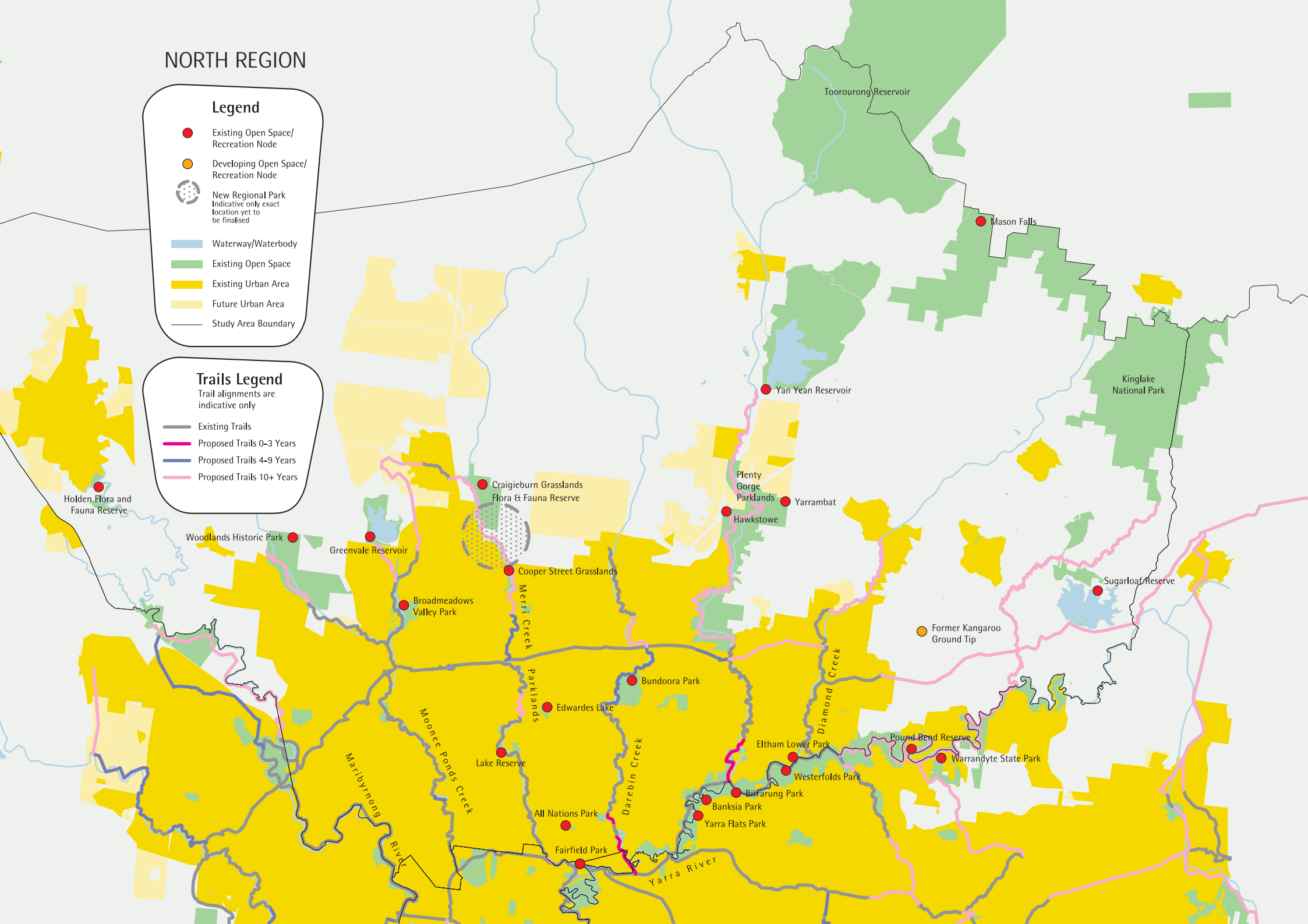
Legend

- Existing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- Developing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- New Regional Park
Indicative only exact location yet to be finalised
- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area
- Future Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Trails Legend

Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years



Holden Flora and Fauna Reserve

Woodlands Historic Park

Greenvale Reservoir

Broadmeadows Valley Park

Cooper Street Grasslands

Craigieburn Grasslands Flora & Fauna Reserve

Plenty Gorge Parklands

Yarrambat

Hawkstowe

Yan Yan Reservoir

Mason Falls

Kinglake National Park

Sugarloaf Reserve

Former Kangaroo Ground Tip

Bundoora Park

Edwardes Lake

Lake Reserve

All Nations Park

Fairfield Park

Birrarung Park

Banksia Park

Yarra Flats Park

Westerfolds Park

Eltham Lower Park

Pound Bend Reserve

Warrandyte State Park

Diamond Creek

Darebin Creek

Moonee Ponds Creek

Maribyrnong River

Toorourong Reservoir

0–3 YEAR ACTIONS

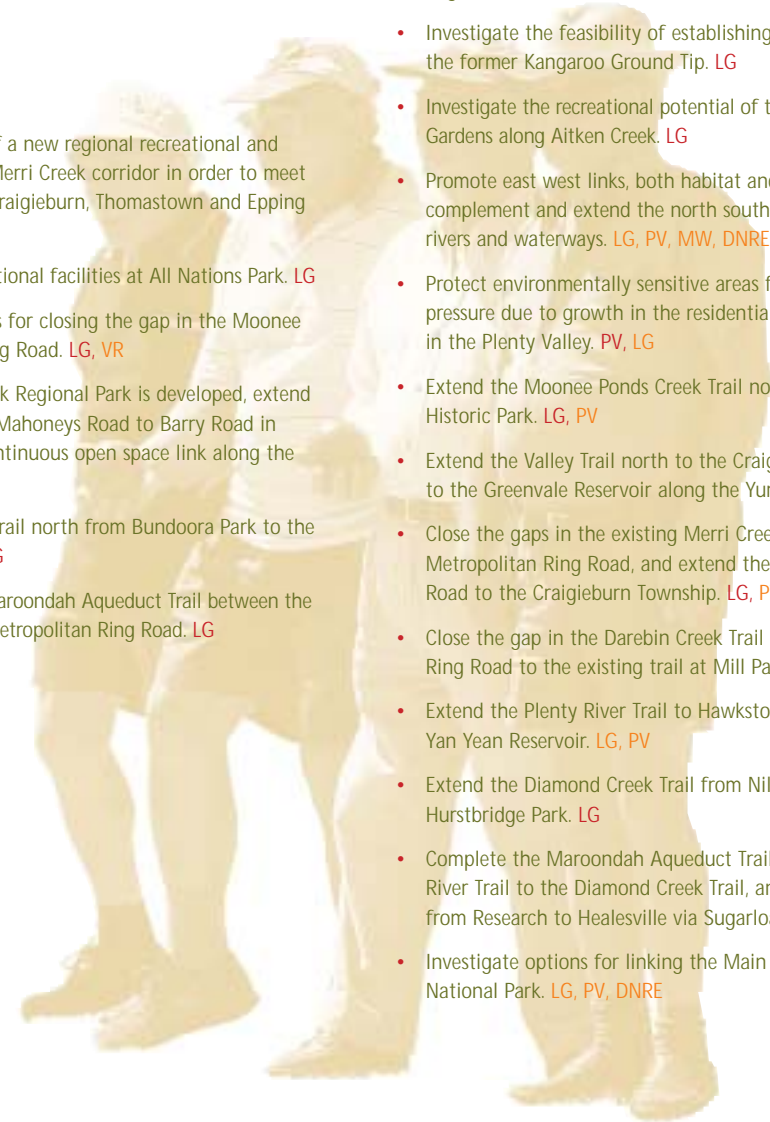
- Define the location for a new regional recreational and conservation park on the Merri Creek corridor in order to meet the recreational needs of Craigieburn, Thomastown and Epping North. **PV, MW, LG, VR**
- Monitor and evaluate further development demand for and use of recreational venues within Plenty Gorge Parklands. Investigate opportunities to expand nature-based trails. **PV**
- For new areas of open space, when possible, give priority to protection of areas of national and State ecological significance. **CoM, LG, PV, DNRE**
- Protect open space that supports significant flora and fauna species, including Kinglake National Park, Plenty Gorge Parklands and the Merri Creek Native Grasslands. **CoM, LG, PV, DNRE**
- Protect, enhance and where possible link the significant riparian vegetation of waterways such as the Yarra River, the Plenty River, the Moonee Ponds Creek, the Merri Creek and Watson's Creek in order to establish regional wildlife corridors. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Protect, restore and increase the cover of depleted vegetation communities, including Plains Grassy Woodland, Herb-Rich Woodland, Native Grassland and Box Ironbark Forest within the existing open space network. Examples include Plenty Gorge Parklands, Woodlands Historic Reserve and Craigieburn Grasslands. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Close the gaps in the Darebin Creek Trail between John Cain Memorial Park south to the Main Yarra Trail at Wilsmere Park. **LG, PV**
- Link the Plenty River Trail to the Main Yarra Trail at Viewbank. **LG, PV**

4–9 YEAR ACTIONS

- Commence development of a new regional recreational and conservation park on the Merri Creek corridor in order to meet the recreational needs of Craigieburn, Thomastown and Epping North. **PV, MW, LG, VR**
- Continue to develop recreational facilities at All Nations Park. **LG**
- Investigate suitable options for closing the gap in the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail at Vanberg Road. **LG, VR**
- As the proposed Merri Creek Regional Park is developed, extend the Merri Creek Trail from Mahoneys Road to Barry Road in order, to form part of a continuous open space link along the Merri Creek. **PV, LG, MW**
- Extend the Darebin Creek Trail north from Bundoora Park to the Metropolitan Ring Road. **LG**
- Close the trail gap in the Maroondah Aqueduct Trail between the Plenty River Trail and the Metropolitan Ring Road. **LG**

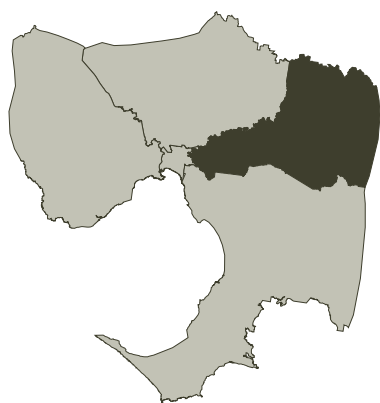
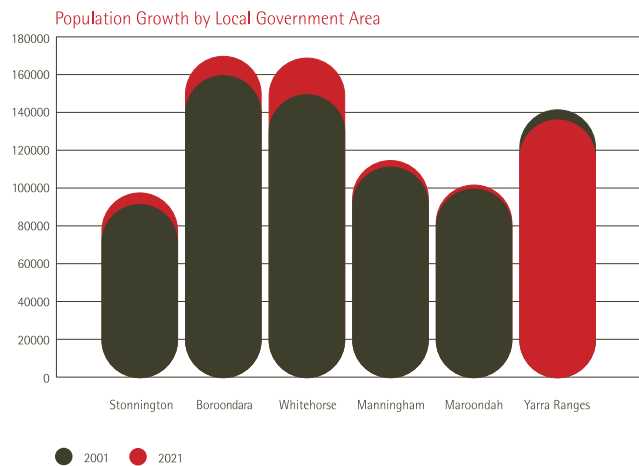
LONGER TERM ACTIONS

- Continue to plan for and develop the proposed Quarry Hills Regional Park. **LG**
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a recreational centre at the former Kangaroo Ground Tip. **LG**
- Investigate the recreational potential of the proposed Craigieburn Gardens along Aitken Creek. **LG**
- Promote east west links, both habitat and trail, in order to complement and extend the north south links along the regions rivers and waterways. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas from increased visitor pressure due to growth in the residential population, especially in the Plenty Valley. **PV, LG**
- Extend the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail north to Woodlands Historic Park. **LG, PV**
- Extend the Valley Trail north to the Craigieburn Township and to the Greenvale Reservoir along the Yuroke Creek. **LG, PV**
- Close the gaps in the existing Merri Creek Trail south of the Metropolitan Ring Road, and extend the trail north from Barry Road to the Craigieburn Township. **LG, PV**
- Close the gap in the Darebin Creek Trail from the Metropolitan Ring Road to the existing trail at Mill Park. **LG**
- Extend the Plenty River Trail to Hawkstowe Park and on to Yan Yean Reservoir. **LG, PV**
- Extend the Diamond Creek Trail from Nillumbik Park to Hurstbridge Park. **LG**
- Complete the Maroondah Aqueduct Trail link from the Plenty River Trail to the Diamond Creek Trail, and establish the trail from Research to Healesville via Sugarloaf Reservoir Park. **LG, PV**
- Investigate options for linking the Main Yarra Trail to Kinglake National Park. **LG, PV, DNRE**





EAST



Location of East Region within the study area

OVERVIEW

The East Region, which comprises Melbourne's eastern suburbs and extends to the Yarra Valley, contains some of the most highly visited open space areas in metropolitan Melbourne. The region's larger areas of open space are concentrated along the Yarra River and in the Dandenong Ranges. Dandenong Valley Parklands, which includes the popular Jells Park, is also located in the region. Additionally, the Yarra River precinct contains major recreation opportunities in the region, including a string of well developed parklands, major shared use-trails and on-water experiences such as canoeing and kayaking. Tourism is focused on the Dandenong Ranges and the area's many ornamental gardens.

Due to the established network and high demand for services and facilities, the region has a well-serviced open space network in which visitors are provided with a diverse range of opportunities.

The region also contains areas of high environmental value, including the ecologically significant Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Ranges national parks and the Yarra River. High levels of community participation are a feature of the region, which encompasses the municipalities of Stonnington, Boroondara, Whitehorse, Manningham, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges.

FUTURE ISSUES

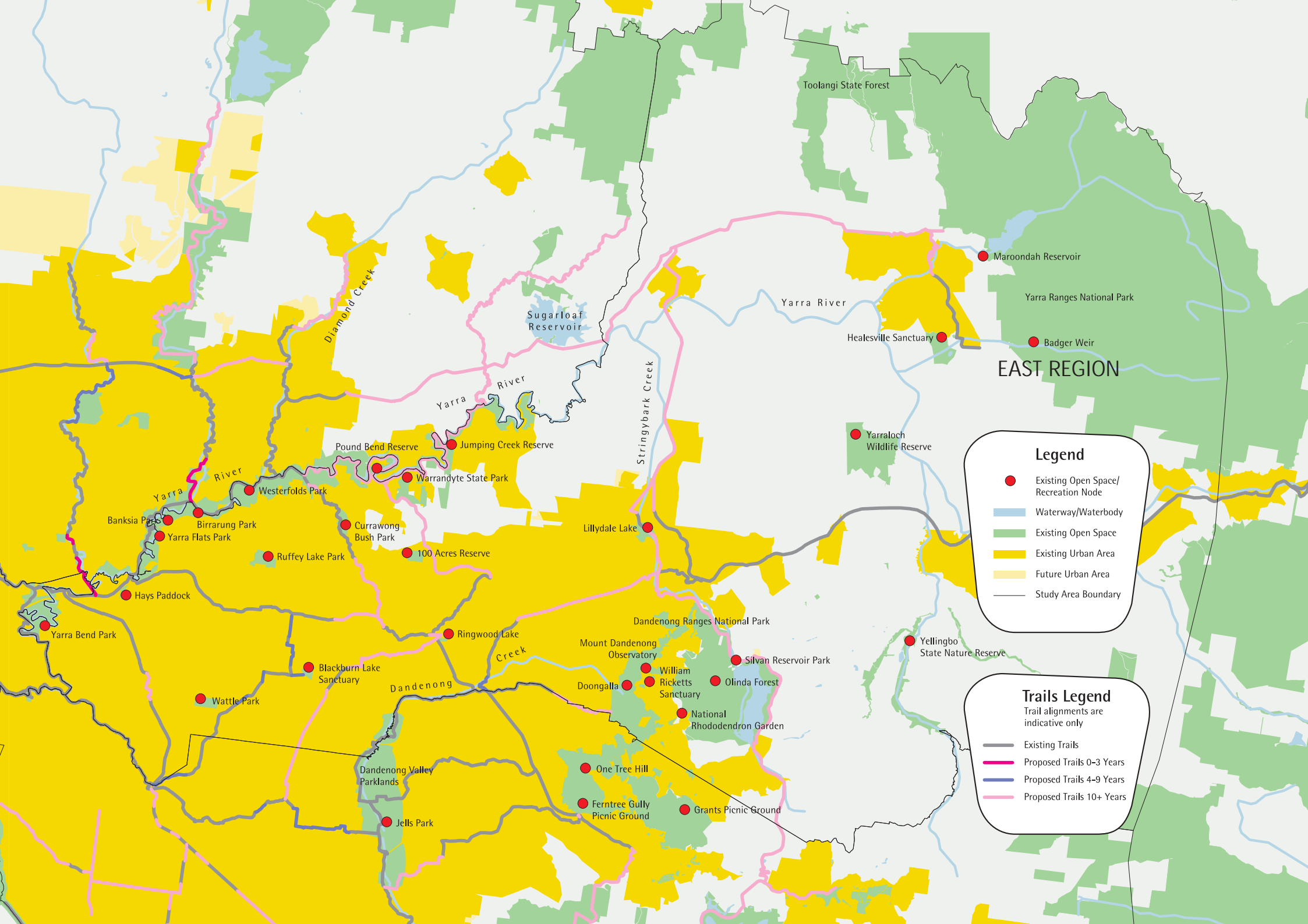
Given the relatively advanced state of open space development and the relatively stable population expectations in the region, the key focus for this region is to enhance the existing facilities at a range of sites.

It is also necessary to continue to protect open space areas of environmental significance from the huge visitor numbers and pressure for recreation facilities and to enhance vegetation links, especially along waterways and between isolated areas of open space.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The requirements for the region's priorities are as follows.

- Reinforcing the main functions of the larger recreation areas and upgrading the existing trail network
- Focusing on diversification of the existing open space in the inner Yarra River area in order to increase the range of recreational opportunities provided
- Protecting environmentally significant areas from potential threats as a result of high visitor numbers and inappropriate use, especially along sensitive areas located on the Yarra River and in the Dandenong Ranges
- Completing the trail network between the Main Yarra and Dandenong Creek trails
- Implementing native vegetation management actions in line with the priorities set in the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan.



EAST REGION

Legend

- Existing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area
- Future Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Trails Legend

Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years

Toolangi State Forest

Maroondah Reservoir

Yarra Ranges National Park

Yarra River

Badger Weir

Healesville Sanctuary

Sugarloaf Reservoir

Yarraloch Wildlife Reserve

Stringybark Creek

Yarra River

Diamond Creek

Pound Bend Reserve

Jumping Creek Reserve

Warrandyte State Park

Yarra River

Westerfolds Park

Banksia Park

Birrarung Park

Yarra Flats Park

Currawong Bush Park

Ruffey Lake Park

100 Acres Reserve

Lillydale Lake

Hays Paddock

Yarra Bend Park

Ringwood Lake

Dandenong Ranges National Park

Mount Dandenong Observatory

Silvan Reservoir Park

Yellingbo State Nature Reserve

Doongalla

William Ricketts Sanctuary

Olinda Forest

National Rhododendron Garden

Dandenong

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary

Wattle Park

Dandenong Valley Parklands

One Tree Hill

Ferntree Gully Picnic Ground

Grants Picnic Ground

Jells Park

0–3 YEAR ACTIONS

- Protect significant flora and fauna species occurring in the open space network, including the Dandenong Ranges National Park, Yarra Ranges National Park, Yarra Valley Parklands, Warrandyte State Park, Dandenong Valley Parklands and Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve. **PV**
- When creating new areas of open space, where possible, give priority to incorporating and protecting Lowland Forest, Swamp Scrub and Valley Grassy Forest vegetation communities. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Increase the cover of depleted Riparian Forest by revegetating the Yarra River and other waterways. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Implement a co-ordinated Yarra River Biolink program in order to connect, revegetate gaps and improve habitat condition in the strategic wildlife corridors of the Yarra River and its key tributaries. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Ensure that trail and existing habitat areas are maintained and/or enhanced as part of the proposed Scoresby Freeway and Eastern Freeway extensions. **VR, LG, PV**

4–9 YEAR ACTIONS

- Continue making improvements to sustainable recreation opportunities provided along the Yarra River. **LG, PV**
- Determine the alignment for extending the Main Yarra Trail from Pettys Orchard to Warrandyte. **LG, PV**
- Close all the gaps in the Gardiners Creek Trail between East Malvern and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and provide an on-road link north to the Koonung Creek Trail. **LG, VR**
- Close the gap in the Croydon Main Drain Trail from Canterbury Road to the Dandenong Creek Trail. **LG**

LONGER TERM ACTIONS

- Upgrade key recreation and tourism opportunities in the Dandenong Ranges National Park in order to protect environmental assets from high visitor and tourism use. **PV**
- Extend the Main Yarra Trail from Pettys Orchard to Warrandyte and then on to Watson's Creek. **LG, DNRE, PV**
- Link the Koonung Creek Trail to the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, and extend the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail south, from Currawong Bush Park to Ringwood Lake and north from Currawong Bush Park to the Main Yarra Trail at Pettys Orchard. **LG, VR, PV**
- Develop a link from the Main Yarra Trail at Warrandyte to Ringwood Lake via Andersons Creek. **LG, PV**
- Upgrade the Anniversary Trail in Camberwell from Frog Hollow Reserve to Boroondara Park. **LG**
- Develop a link from Scotchmans Creek Trail to Ringwood Lake via the Mitcham Reservoir. **LG**
- Link the Corhanwarrabul Creek Trail to the Dandenong Creek Trail. **LG, PV**
- Extend the Dandenong Creek Trail from Boronia to the Dandenong Ranges National Park. **LG, PV**
- Close the gaps in the rail trail between Bayswater and Belgrave. **LG, VR**
- Investigate a trail link from Lilydale Lake to the Maroondah Aqueduct Trail at Yarra Glen along the disused railway line. **LG, PV**
- Link the Warburton Rail Trail to the Lilydale-Yarra Glen Rail Trail. **LG, DNRE**
- Develop a link between the Warburton Rail Trail and Lilydale Lake along the Olinda Creek. **LG, PV**
- Link the Warburton Rail Trail to the Croydon Main Drain Trail via the O'Shannassy Aqueduct Trail. **LG**
- Develop the Olinda Creek, Mt Evelyn Aqueduct and Menzies Creek Trails to link the Warburton Rail Trail to Cardinia Reservoir Park, via Silvan Reservoir Park, including establishing a trail link to Emerald Lake Park. **PV, LG**



SOUTH
EAST

FUTURE ISSUES

The open space available in this region is patchy. Significant parklands exist or are planned, for example Cardinia Creek Parklands, and some extensive trail networks are in place in urbanised areas. However, these tend to thin out towards the south of the region. Growth areas, and specifically the Cranbourne area, are significantly under-provided with open space. Large open space areas in the north and on the coastline contain most of the regions important environmental values.

The south eastern growth area will have major implications for management of neighbouring environmental values, recreational facilities and open space. It is the greatest driver of change in this region.

Due to the increasing residential population, pressure is expected on areas of environmental significance and sensitivity, such as Mornington Peninsula National Park and the Western Port coastline.

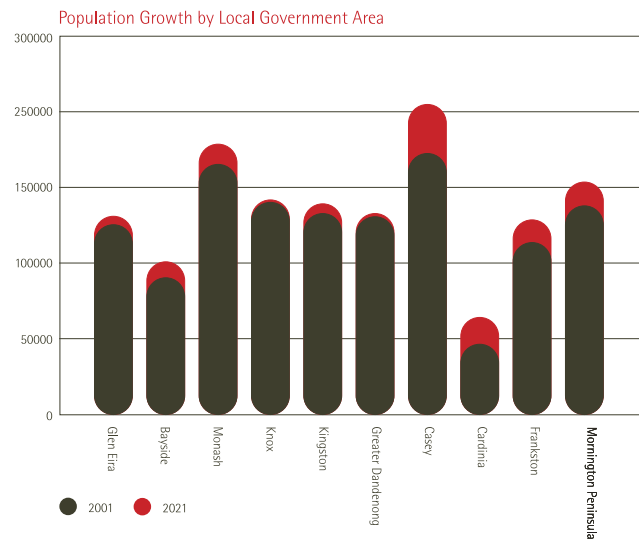
Coastal areas south of Mordialloc will come under pressure from beach users as the region's population grows. Facilitating improved access to the beaches south of Mordialloc and planning for increased visits at coastal areas south of Somers will have to be considered. Seasonal population increases over summer also result in increased pressure on many coastal reserves located on the southern peninsula during this time.

Ongoing actions within the region are focused on managing and maintaining existing parklands and promoting the parklands in which visitor numbers and awareness are low, including Police Paddocks and The Briars. A key priority is also maintenance of the current diversity of water-based activities and events undertaken at the National Water Sports Centre. High service levels must be maintained in provision of boat launching and boat storage facilities at Patterson River, Frankston, Rye and Sorrento in order to facilitate safe access to Port Phillip Bay. Associated with this is maintenance or enhancement of appropriate public toilet amenities at popular beaches.

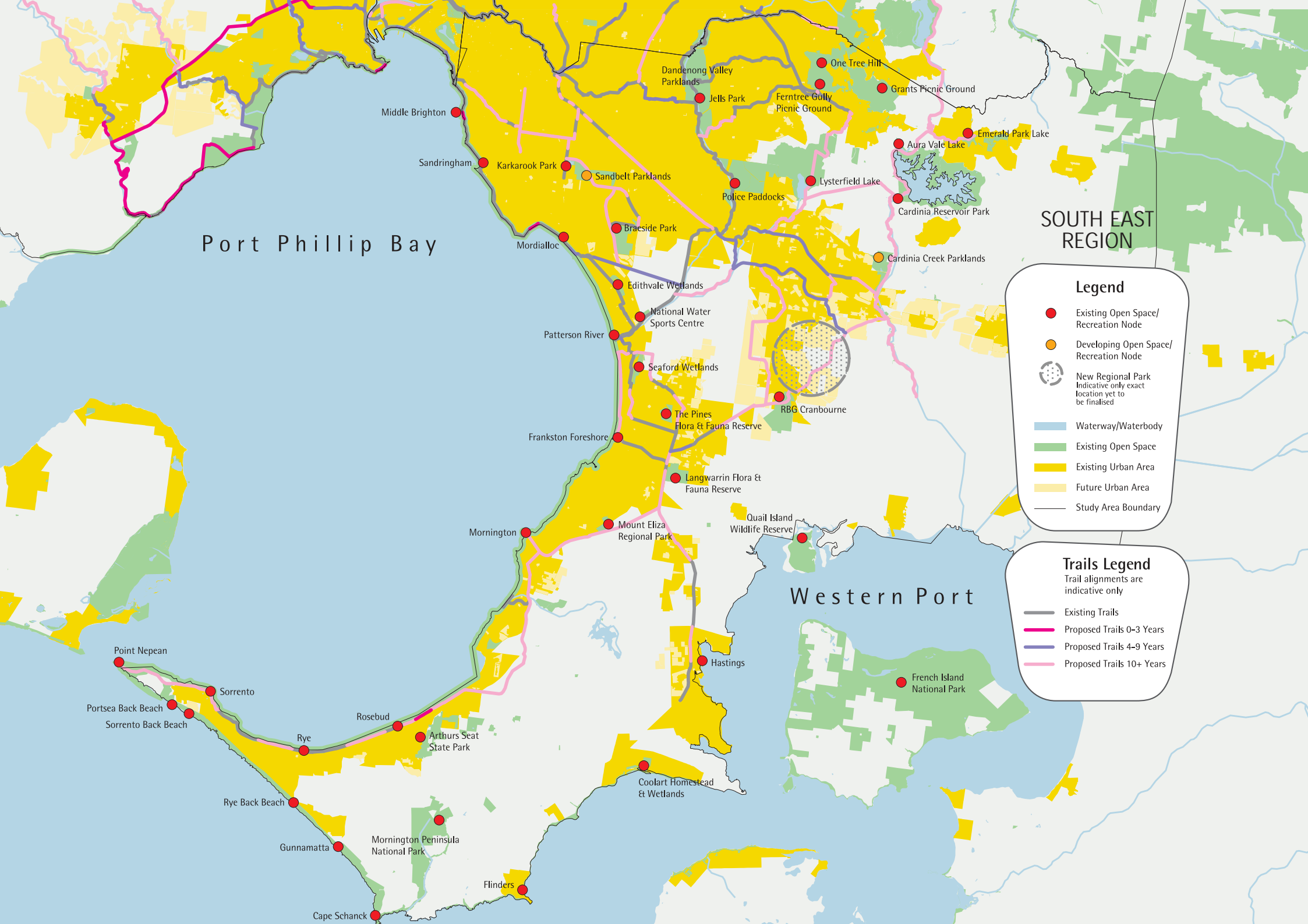
OVERVIEW

The South-East Region not only covers a large proportion of Melbourne's growth area it also includes the Mornington Peninsula, which is often described as 'Melbourne's playground' due to the high influx of visitors during summer months. The region is extremely diverse, incorporating well-established urban areas, such as Brighton and Malvern, as well as the less developed areas located on the northern shores of Western Port. The coast contains the regions major recreational and natural assets, having a diverse range of recreational opportunities, significant natural habitats and picturesque landscapes. Whereas recreation activity is focused along the sandy beaches of Port Phillip Bay, Western Port supports internationally and nationally significant ecological communities.

Major parklands in the region include Lysterfield Lake Park, Churchill National Park, Braeside Park, Karkarook Park, Police Paddocks, Mt Eliza Regional Park, Mornington Peninsula National Park, Arthurs Seat and the Cranbourne Royal Botanic Gardens. The region encompasses the municipalities of Mornington Peninsula, Frankston, Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Knox, Monash, Bayside and Glen Eira.



Location of South East Region within the study area



SOUTH EAST REGION

Legend

- Existing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- Developing Open Space/ Recreation Node
- New Regional Park
Indicative only exact location yet to be finalised
- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area
- Future Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Trails Legend

Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years

Port Phillip Bay

Western Port

Point Nepean
 Sorrento
 Portsea Back Beach
 Sorrento Back Beach
 Rye
 Rye Back Beach
 Gunnamatta
 Cape Schanck
 Rosebud
 Arthurs Seat State Park
 Mornington Peninsula National Park
 Flinders

Middle Brighton
 Sandringham
 Karkarook Park
 Sandbelt Parklands
 Mordialloc
 Braeside Park
 Edithvale Wetlands
 National Water Sports Centre
 Patterson River
 Seaford Wetlands
 Frankston Foreshore
 Mornington
 Mount Eliza Regional Park
 The Pines Flora & Fauna Reserve
 Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve
 Quail Island Wildlife Reserve
 Hastings
 Coolart Homestead & Wetlands

Dandenong Valley Parklands
 Jells Park
 Ferntree Gully Picnic Ground
 One Tree Hill
 Grants Picnic Ground
 Emerald Park Lake
 Aura Vale Lake
 Lysterfield Lake
 Police Paddocks
 Cardinia Reservoir Park
 Cardinia Creek Parklands
 RBG Cranbourne

French Island National Park

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Requirements for the region's priorities are as follows.

- Meeting the open space needs of the expanding south-eastern population base
- Enhancing safe access to the bay through provision of facilities at key activity nodes
- Protecting the Western Port and Port Phillip coastline's significant and sensitive natural environment from threatening processes
- Providing new trails and links to existing open space areas in order to meet current urban needs as well as future growth needs
- Providing appropriate water-based access to the proposed Port Phillip Heads Marine Park
- Facilitating co-operative management between land managers, private land owners, and developers, and obtaining support from the surrounding community in order to ensure the survival of the region's environmental values
- Implementing native vegetation management actions in line with the priorities set in the Port Phillip and Westernport Native Vegetation Plan.

0–3 YEAR ACTIONS

- Define the location and boundaries for a new regional parkland around the Cranbourne area in order to meet the future demand of the expanding south-eastern suburbs. **PV, LG**
- Commence implementation of the Cardinia Creek Parklands Future Directions Plan, including development of a new recreation node in order to diversify passive recreational opportunities in the south east growth corridor. **PV, MW, DNRE, LG**
- Complete development of Karkarook Parklands, and continue investigating expansion of future Sandbelt Parkland proposals. **PV**
- Implement a co-ordinated Urban Biolink program in order to connect and revegetate gaps and to improve habitat condition in the strategic wildlife corridors located along the Dandenong and Cardinia creeks. **LG, PV, MW, DNRE, CoM**
- Outside coastal activity nodes, confine recreational use to passive unstructured activities. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Protect significant flora and fauna species within the regional parks and reserves, including those at Mornington Peninsula National Park, and Langwarrin and Pines flora and fauna reserves. **PV, LG**
- Protect the habitat values of regional wetlands, including the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands, Braeside Park and Jells Park. **MW, PV**
- Protect and, where possible, increase the cover of depleted vegetation communities in existing parklands and waterways, including Dandenong Creek, Churchill National Park and Dandenong Valley Parklands. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- For new areas of open space, where possible, give priority to protecting and increasing Plains Grassy Woodland, Lowland Forest, Swamp Scrub and Coastal Grassy Woodland vegetation types. **LG, PV, DNRE, MW, CoM**
- Close the gaps in the Bay Trail at Middle Brighton Baths, Beaumaris and McCrae. **LG, PV**

4–9 YEAR ACTIONS

- Continue to implement the Rosebud Foreshore Reserve Landscape Master Plan. **PV**
- Provide appropriate recreational facilities at key coastal activity nodes, ensuring that any new facilities and developments are coastal dependent or related to coastal dependent uses. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM.**
- Upgrade visitor facilities at the activity nodes located at Rye Back Beach, Gunnamatta Beach, Cape Schanck and Flinders. **PV**
- Ensure provision of appropriate facilities and amenities at coastal villages located between Somers and Flinders in order to cater for increased recreational use. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Ensure provision of appropriate berthing facilities at Portsea and Sorrento in order to support access to the bay and key destinations, including the proposed Port Phillip Heads Marine Park. **PV, LG, DNRE**
- Rationalise outdated or over-supplied coastal infrastructure, and promote shared use, renovation and re-use of existing buildings before building additional structures. **LG, PV, DNRE, CoM**
- Investigate opportunities to improve access to the beaches between Mordialloc and Seaford. **LG**
- Finalise strategic management plans for Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and the Bellarine Peninsula, and for Western Port Ramsar sites, and commence implementation. **DNRE, LG, PV, MW, CoM**
- Close the gaps in the Bay Trail at Mordialloc Beach and Launching Way, Carrum. **LG**
- Link Mordialloc Beach to the Dandenong Creek Trail along the Mordialloc Creek. **LG**
- Establish a trail adjacent to the proposed Princes Freeway extension to Berwick. **VR**
- Link Berwick Springs to the Dandenong Creek Trail via the Hallam Main Drain and north along the Eumemmerring Creek. **LG**
- Close the gaps in the Frankston/Cranbourne Trail at Langwarrin. **LG**
- Close the gaps in the Scotchmans Creek Trail at Mount Waverley, and investigate options to develop a link in the Scotchmans Creek Trail from Waverley Road to Jells Road. **LG**





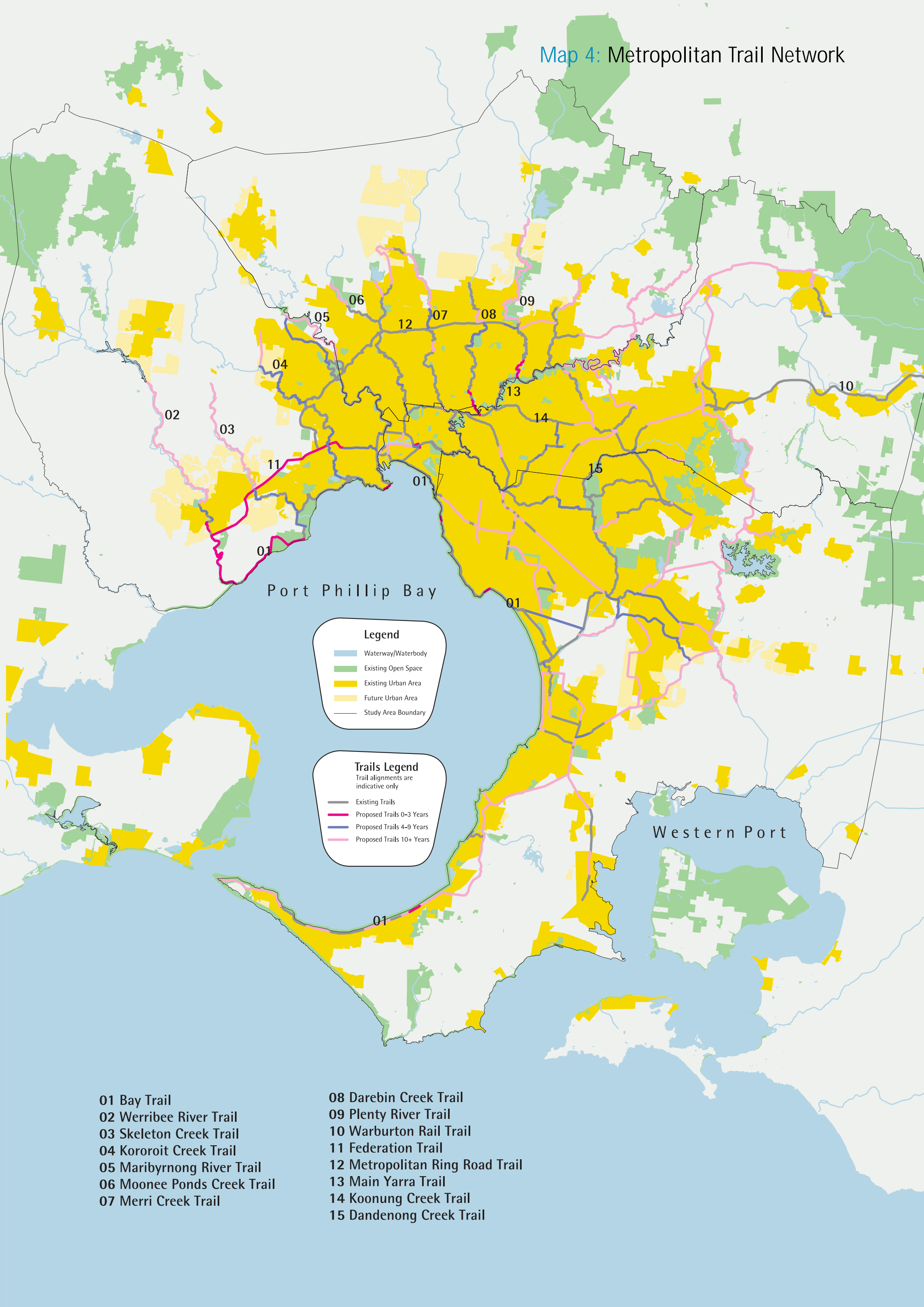
LONGER TERM ACTIONS

- Establish a new regional parkland around the Cranbourne area in order to help meet the future demand of the expanding south-eastern suburbs. **PV, LG**
- Continue to develop recreational opportunities within the proposed Sandbelt Parklands as sites become available. **PV, LG**
- Provide support for development of major visitor facilities at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. **RBGC**
- Ensure provision of appropriate public berthing facilities at Mordialloc, Frankston, Mornington, Hastings, Cowes, Patterson River, Warneet, Tooradin and San Remo. **DNRE, LG, PV**
- Investigate the options for upgrading the Flinders Pier breakwater in order to provide a safe harbour. **PV**
- Continue to reinforce existing parklands that contain important environmental values and passive recreation opportunities, and promote the parklands that have low visitor and awareness levels, including Police Paddocks, Dandenong Creek Floodplain and The Briars. **PV, LG, MW**
- Promote incorporation of facilities in existing parks through which diversity and equity of recreational opportunities are increased. **LG, PV, DNRE, MW, CoM**
- Complete the gaps along the Bay Trail between Seaford and Frankston and from Mornington to Point Nepean. **LG, PV**
- Link the Eel Race Drain Trail to the bay at Carrum. **LG**
- Develop a trail along the proposed Dingley Freeway in order to link Karkarook Parklands to Westall Road. **VR**
- Create a continuous open space link by developing a trail from Karkarook Parklands to Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve via Braeside Park, the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands and the Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve. **PV, LG, VR, MW**
- Link the Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve and Mt Eliza Regional Park to the Bay Trail. Assess the environmental feasibility of forging a connection along the Mornington Railway Trail. **LG, PV**
- Close the gaps along the Frankston-Flinders Trail between Hastings and the Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve. **LG**

- Investigate opportunities for providing an off-road trail link from Caulfield Racecourse to Moorabbin. **LG**
- Link the Bay Trail to Bentleigh Station along Elster Creek, and link the rail trail at Bentleigh Station to the Dingley Freeway Trail. **LG, VR**
- Link the Dandenong rail trail south to Centre Road and north to the Scotchmans Creek Trail at East Malvern Station. **LG**
- Close the gaps in the Dandenong Rail Trail and link the trail to the Dandenong Creek Trail. **LG**
- Link the Hallam Main Drain Trail to the Princes Freeway Trail at Sweeney Reserve, Narre Warren. **LG, VR**
- Establish a trail link from the Patterson River Trail to the Hallam Main Drain, and link the Hallam Main Drain Trail to Langwarrin. **LG**
- Link Lysterfield Lake Park to the Eumemmerring Creek Trail at Doveton, to Cardinia Reservoir Park, and to Belgrave Township via Birds Land Reserve. **LG, PV**
- Provide an on-road link from Berwick to Beaconsfield. **VR**
- Link the Cardinia Creek Trail at Beaconsfield to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens via Berwick Springs. **LG, RBGC**
- Develop the Cardinia Creek Trail from Clyde North to Cardinia Reservoir. **LG, PV**



Map 4: Metropolitan Trail Network



Legend

- Waterway/Waterbody
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Urban Area
- Future Urban Area
- Study Area Boundary

Trails Legend
Trail alignments are indicative only

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails 0-3 Years
- Proposed Trails 4-9 Years
- Proposed Trails 10+ Years

- 01 Bay Trail
- 02 Werribee River Trail
- 03 Skeleton Creek Trail
- 04 Kororoit Creek Trail
- 05 Maribyrnong River Trail
- 06 Moonee Ponds Creek Trail
- 07 Merri Creek Trail

- 08 Darebin Creek Trail
- 09 Plenty River Trail
- 10 Warburton Rail Trail
- 11 Federation Trail
- 12 Metropolitan Ring Road Trail
- 13 Main Yarra Trail
- 14 Koonung Creek Trail
- 15 Dandenong Creek Trail

IMPLEMENTATION

COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Implementation of this strategy will involve the co-operative resources of a range of government and non-government land management agencies, local government and the broader community. As a result of effective partnerships between these agencies, complementary management of the metropolitan open space network will be facilitated and it will be more possible to generate the necessary resources for ensuring that priorities as outlined are implemented and that broader social goals, including access and equity, are addressed.

Parks Victoria will organise annual forums for open space managers in order to assist in developing a co-operative approach to planning and management. The forums focus will be on the key principles of partnerships, equity, diversity, flexibility and responsiveness, and sustainability. The forums will also be an opportunity for communicating progress about the actions.

Other organisations such as the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the Victorian Coastal Council, the Central Coastal Board and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board will continue to co-ordinate various aspects of the open space network.

Parks Victoria is also committed to posting *Linking People and Spaces* online. Land managers and the broader community will thereby have better access to the document and to updates on the progress of the actions. The Website will also have details and links to relevant strategies and funding sources that are available to open space managers and community groups working on open space.

RESOURCING

Implementation of the actions outlined in the strategy is the responsibility of numerous organisations. As in the past, open space in the metropolitan area will continue to be mainly developed by local government and other agencies such as Parks Victoria, funded from their revenue sources, and additional funds will be provided through grants programs. Through the Parks Victoria Grants Program (and predecessor), for example, some \$44.5 million has been provided over eight years towards almost 800 projects. It is estimated that metropolitan councils spend more than \$20 million annually on open space programs. Parks Victoria spends more than \$50 million on recreation, environmental and cultural programs on regional parks as well as for state and national parks in the metropolitan area.

In addition to the Parks Victoria Grants Program, open space management bodies have used a variety of funding sources (federal, State, philanthropic and corporate) on a project-specific basis in order to 'grow' the network. VicRoads will continue to extend the on-road trail network, including the sections located along new freeways. Open space managers are encouraged to consider opportunities for seeking corporate funding contributions to local projects as well as funding partnerships with organisations such as the Office of Marine Safety, VicHealth, VicRoads, and Sport and Recreation Victoria.

Other sources include organisations that have the competencies and resources to undertake many projects, include Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Greening Australia and Friends Network.


Information about the various funding sources available to land managers and community groups working on open space are available at the Parks Victoria website: www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The intentions and actions of this strategy must be implemented in a sustainable way both financially and with commitment from managers and the community. Implementation of the strategy will be reviewed annually, and priorities will be updated every five years.

The annual open space forums will be an opportunity for collecting information about the progress of actions from the various agencies. Information about the implementation of the strategy is also available on the Parks Victoria website: www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

As well as Parks Victoria, organisations such as the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the Victorian Coastal Council, the Central Coastal Board and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment and Land Protection Board will evaluate and review aspects of the open space network.



*Linking People and Spaces is available at Parks Victoria's website.
The website will be periodically updated to reflect the actions
completed across the network.*

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

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