



**13.1 PUBLIC TOILET PLAN 2023 - 2033 - DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To present the draft Public Toilet Plan 2023 – 2033 and seek approval to commence a period of community consultation.

**2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Council's current Public Toilet Plan 2013-2023 is out of date, due for expiration and requires updating.
- 2.2 Council's current Public Toilet Plan provides guidance and practical assistance for planning and decision making in the development, maintenance and operation of the public toilet network across the municipality.
- 2.3 A draft Public Toilet Plan 2023-2033 has been developed to update the guidance and renewal plan for the next ten years, and includes specific metrics outlining the current toilet network, targets for the future toilet network and estimated activities and costs on how those targets may be achieved.
- 2.4 The activities on how to achieve the targets identified includes a variety of operational initiatives that can be immediately implemented, as well as longer term initiatives and the development of a prioritised 10-year program of major upgrades, minor renewals and investigative feasibility studies to inform future works.
- 2.5 Whilst some of the initiatives can be undertaken as ongoing business as usual works, majority have a financial impact that has been outlined within the plan, with capital works valued at \$4.355m over 10-years and operational initiatives estimated at \$160k minimum upfront, with additional associated ongoing costs.
- 2.6 The plan also includes updated guidance and recommendations relating to operations, maintenance and design, based on changes in the landscape and environment in which toilets are viewed, and the impact of environmental sustainability, safety, gender equity and accessibility.
- 2.7 Key internal stakeholders have been consulted on the development of the new Public Toilet Plan and this report seeks approval to release the draft plan to the community to review and provide feedback through planned community engagement activities.
- 2.8 Feedback from community consultation on the draft plan will enable the plan to be further refined and a final Public Toilet Plan to be adopted by Council for implementation across 2023 – 2033.



### 3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Authorises the Draft Public Toilet Plan 2023 – 2033 to be released for a period of community consultation following the endorsement of the draft plan.
- 3.2 Notes that feedback from the consultation period will be presented alongside the final Public Toilet Plan 2023 – 2033 in August 2023.

### 4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The provision of clean, safe and accessible public toilets affects all local residents and visitors to an area and plays a major role in the image of a Council or neighbourhood.
- 4.2 Councils have no statutory requirements to provide public toilets, however it is generally accepted that Council's will provide these crucial amenities to support active participation by the community in social, recreational and commercial activities.
- 4.3 Council has 48 Council managed public toilets facilities across the municipality and has a license agreement with a further three\* private operators to allow for public access to their amenities. (\*Council's existing license for 101 Beach St is due to expire at the end of May and will not be reinstated following the construction of new Council toilets at Waterfront Pl, reducing the license agreement to three overall).
- 4.4 Council faces a number of challenges in maintaining the toilet assets as majority of these are ageing and in fair to poor condition and an average of 20 requests/complaints are received each month relating to the cleaning and maintenance of these facilities. Subsequently Council is spending a significant amount of money each month responding to reactive maintenance requirements and additional cleaning requests.
- 4.5 Council's current Public Toilet Plan 2013-2023 provides guidance and practical assistance for planning and decision making in the development, maintenance and operation of the public toilet network across the City of Port Phillip, as well as recommended renewal, upgrade and new facilities to be considered.
- 4.6 The existing Public Toilet Plan has reached the end of its life and is out of date with numerous upgrades and renewals occurring over this time which are not captured, nor does it adequately cater for changing social expectations in regards to accessibility, gender equity, and general behaviours.

#### **Approach to developing the draft Public Toilet Plan 2023 - 2033**

- 4.7 The approach to developing the draft Public Toilet Plan included reviewing and including the similarities of the previous plan, and using this to update guidance and recommendations based on changes in the landscape and environment in which toilets are viewed, and the impact of environmental sustainability, safety, gender equity and accessibility This will assist to enhance the liveability in the community by improving the condition, safety, accessibility, environmental sustainability and convenience of our public toilet facilities
- 4.8 The plan takes into consideration learnings from previous projects and metrics data captured from reactive maintenance and community requests/complaints over a number of months in order to form the recommendations. It is expected that the work



request and community request/complaint data will be continued to be monitored to provide assurance that targets are met.

- 4.9 A gender impact assessment was completed prior to completing the draft toilet plan in order to understand the impact of public toilets on all members of the community and has led to additional recommendations relating to equity, both as immediate initiatives (sanitary bins and baby change tables), as well as in the design guidelines to ensure we are able to provide all-gender toilets in future projects, despite the limitations of the current building code.

**Public toilet plan content: outcomes and strategies**

- 4.10 The structure and content of the draft Public Toilet Plan includes the following:

- Objectives
- Current state of public toilet network
- Future vision of the public toilet network
- Targets and recommendations to achieve identified targets including potential cost implications
- 10-year capital works program
- Operational service levels, standards and recommendations
- Design guidelines (as an appendix)

- 4.11 The draft plan outlines key metrics to describe the current public toilet network considering key objectives including condition, accessibility, safety and equity, as well as targets for improved performance across the network over the 10-years, and key activities that can be undertaken to achieve these targets.

- 4.12 The key activities include operational initiatives that can be immediately undertaken to provide instant improvements, such as the installation of Master Locksmith Association Keys (MLAK) and provision of additional sanitary bins, as well as longer term considerations including the implementation of scheduled maintenance regimes, data collection through technology, public education, revised cleaning schedules and capital works investment through the development of a 10-year upgrade and renewal plan. The estimated costs of each of these initiatives has also been outlined to give Councillors an understanding of the financial impact to the respective improvements.

- 4.13 The draft plan also includes an initial 10-year renewal and upgrade program was developed using select criteria to inform develop the priority of works. These criteria include condition, utilisation, ongoing known maintenance or anti-social behaviour issues, demand where there is no provision, and planned upgrades to broader building contexts. The 10-year program has been divided into major upgrades, minor renewals and investigation/feasibility studies to determine future works requirements.

- 4.14 Whilst this 10-year renewal and upgrade plan has been included, additional works will likely be required following the outcomes of service planning, data collection investigations, feasibility assessments and requirements from private operators. The plan is intended to be reviewed annually and recommendations, future works and budget implications updated and reported accordingly in line with the annual budget build process.

- 4.15 Toilet projects currently in progress and due for completion by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023 have been included as *completed* when developing this plan.



- 4.16 Existing and possible future operational service levels are also noted with any proposed changes to improve condition and functionality have been included with any recommended changes to existing operations outlined.
- 4.17 The draft Public Toilet Plan also touches on some of the ongoing issues that Council faces daily in maintaining public toilet facilities, such as anti-social behaviour and people experiencing homelessness occupying public toilets longer-term, and some options to assist in reducing the likelihood of these instances occurring whilst acknowledging that Council officers have little control over these, and they are a broader social issue rather than specifically a public toilet issue.
- 4.18 Design guidelines have been included as an appendix and notes the specific considerations that must be given to all new and renewal public toilet works to ensure the key objectives outlined in the plan will be met and targets achieved.

## 5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 A workshop was held prior to the development of the draft plan 2023-33 with key internal stakeholders from across the organisation to ensure alignment to key priorities and strategies
- 5.2 Stakeholders were included from the following areas:
- Asset Management
  - Building Maintenance
  - Open Space/Recreation/Foreshore
  - Access and Inclusion
  - City Design
  - Sustainability
  - Transport
  - Real Estate/Property
  - Community Building and Inclusion
    - Housing and Homelessness
    - Gender Equity Advisor
    - LGBTIQA+ Strategic Advisor
- 5.3 Additionally, data received from the community through requests and complaints, and general feedback from previous public toilet projects and operations, was reviewed and utilised to assist in the development of the objectives, recommendations and priorities of the 10-year renewal plan.
- 5.4 Release of the draft Public Toilet Plan 2023 – 2033 for community members and stakeholders to provide feedback is now proposed prior to its formal adoption. The proposed engagement activities and dates are set out in section 11 of this report.
- 5.5 The broader community will be advised of the consultation through corfulte signage outside public toilets, posters internally in toilets, and social media posts.
- 5.6 A number of key stakeholders have also been identified with specific interest and/or experience/guidance in the provision of public toilets including disability advisory groups, homelessness support groups, traders' associations, and the Older Persons Advisory Committee amongst others. These groups will be specifically contacted once



consultation is open to provide their feedback/guidance on particular aspects of the plan.

## **6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Whilst Council are not legally required to provide public toilet amenities, it is generally expected that Council's will provide these.
- 6.2 Council faces reputational and legal/financial risks if toilets are not maintained and renewed to ensure they are clean, safe and accessible to the entire community.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

- 7.1 Development of the draft Public Toilet Plan has been undertaken in-house using existing staff resources.
- 7.2 Effective implementation of the recommendations of the Toilet Plan will require on-going staff resourcing which can be achieved within existing program and service budgets, noting the need to allocate staff time.
- 7.3 A number of toilet projects are included major project budgets or building asset renewal budgets. The plan outlines a number of both operational initiatives and planned capital works with their estimated financial impact
- 7.4 The draft Public Toilet Plan 2023-203 correlates to Council's long term financial plan with the ten-year renewal and upgrade program budget requirements captured as part of the budget build process. This will be reviewed annually in line with the Council Plan and Budget build process.
- 7.5 The capital works outlined in this plan are estimated to cost approximately \$4,355,000 over ten years.
- 7.6 Should Council endorse the operational recommendations outlined with the plan that can be implemented immediately to provide an instant improvement of the public toilet network, initial upfront capital investment of \$160K-\$185K will be required, as well as additional ongoing costs.

## **8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 8.1 The Public Toilet plan includes guidelines for climate change consideration throughout design and construction, along with sustainable minimum performance standards that are to be adhered to when constructing new or upgrading existing public toilets to minimise environmental impacts.

## **9. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 9.1 The provision of public toilets are considered a critical piece of urban infrastructure and can enhance the liveability of an area.
- 9.2 Public toilets support tourism and economic development as their availability can encourage active participation by the community and visitors in social, recreation and commercial activities.
- 9.3 The Public Toilet Plan informs the community of the current state of our public toilet assets, the challenges Council faces, and the operational and capital investment priorities for the next ten years and provides a technical tool for community engagement.



- 9.4 The recommendations included in the Public Toilet Plan will also make a positive social impact by providing more equitable, safe and accessible amenities for the whole community to utilise.

## 10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The development of the draft Public Toilet Plan aligns to strategic direction 1 *Inclusive Port Phillip*:

- Strategic Objective: A city that is a place for all members of our community where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.
- Four Year Strategy: “Port Phillip is more accessible and welcoming for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities”.

- 10.2 The development of the draft Public Toilet Plan also aligns to strategic direction 3 *Sustainable Port Phillip*:

- Strategic Objective: A city that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.
- Four Year Strategy: “The city is actively mitigating and adapting to climate changes and invests in designing, constructing and managing our public spaces to optimise water sustainable and reduce flooding”.

- 10.3 The development of the draft Public Toilet Plan also aligns to strategic direction 5 *Well Governed Port Phillip*:

- Strategic Objective: A city that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.
- Four Year Strategy: “Port Phillip Council is a high-performing, innovative, inclusive and balances the diverse needs of our community in its decision-making” and “Port Phillip Council is cost-effective, efficient and delivers with speed, simplicity and confidence” and “Our community has the opportunity to participate in civic life to inform Council decision-making”.

## 11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### 11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 The draft Public Toilet plan will be released for consultation in the first week of June and run for four weeks.
- 11.1.2 Responses will be collated and feedback from the consultation provided to Councillors and the community in mid-late July.
- 11.1.3 A report will be brought to Council with the outcomes and updated Toilet Plan in early August for endorsement.

### 11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 A Have Your Say page will be set up for consultation in early June which will provide background information, key messaging, frequently asked questions and a selection of questions for the community to respond to.





11.2.2 Corflute signs will be erected outside a selection of public toilets across the municipality advertising the Have Your Say page for the community to provide feedback into the plan. Posters will also be put on in certain toilet stalls further advertising the consultation period on the draft plan. Social media posts will also be used to communicate the consultation period.

11.2.3 An article will also be prepared for the Divecity newsletter and Council website.

11.2.4 The community will be advised of the outcomes of the consultation through a follow up Council report, further articles and social media posts, and direct contact to those who may request it during consultation.

## **12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST**

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

**ATTACHMENTS**    1. [City of Port Phillip Draft Public Toilet Plan 2023 -2033](#)↓