

Motion

That the Future Melbourne Committee:

1. Requests that updates on the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor improvement projects listed at paragraph A be provided in accordance with paragraph B.
 - A. Improvement projects:
 1. Commonwealth funding for Moonee Ponds Creek restoration.
 2. Active transport bridge/s plan.
 3. Macaulay Development Contributions Plan controls.
 4. VicTrack land transfer or community lease.
 5. Chelmsford Street local park.
 6. Arden integrated stormwater management open space.
 7. Creek hard rubbish and litter collection program.
 8. Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan.
 9. West Gate Tunnel Project local trees replacement.
 10. Trail reinstatement in Docklands.
 11. Pump upgrades and any other relevant projects identified by management.
 - B. Requested updates:
 1. By 29 February 2024 – online publication of an information page that includes mapping of the City of Melbourne extent of the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor with the following overlays:
 - 1.1. The land owner;
 - 1.2. The land manager;
 - 1.3. The general location of each of the improvement projects identified; and
 - 1.4. In relation to each improvement project – the title of the project, the identification of the lead agency/authority, a broad description of the purpose and extent of the project, a short history of progress towards implementing the project, and the current status of the project.
 2. By 5 March 2024 – a report to this committee that includes the same information set out in paragraph 2.1 as well as an advocacy plan to progress any project outside the direct control of the City of Melbourne, that advocacy plan to consider:
 - 2.1. Which projects require State or Commonwealth Government budget bids for 2024-25 and what should be done to progress those bids;
 - 2.2. Which projects may be suitable for known State and Commonwealth grant opportunities and what should be done to apply for those grants; and
 - 2.3. The role of the local community and Moonee Ponds Creek stakeholders in joining advocacy efforts and holding Governments to account.
2. Requests that management make, or cooperate with another relevant authority to make, an application for a grant under the Commonwealth Urban Rivers and Catchments Program to progress any of the improvement projects that are deemed suitable.

Background

Major Initiative 19 of the current Council Plan is to “Celebrate, partner and advocate for investment in the city’s three key waterways, the Yarra River – Birrarung, the Maribyrnong and Moonee Ponds Creek, to connect these key recreational and biodiversity assets of our city.”

In FY 2023-24 Council resolved to pursue the following activities under this Major Initiative:

- “Advocate for the implementation of, and Australian Government funding for the Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan, including exploration of creek improvements in the southern reaches and reinstatement of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail in Docklands”; and
- “Advocate for coordinated governance of our key waterways by the Victorian Government, including resolving fragmented land ownership and responsibilities across government agencies and departments.”

Council further indicated that in Quarter 2 (October to December 2023) it would “[consider] advocacy for Moonee Ponds Creek federal funding.”

This motion seeks to advance work on all elements of Major Initiative 19.

The motion makes no new policy decisions and instead seeks to prepare the strongest possible advocacy plan to progress plans and projects already announced by multiple levels of Government, as well as authorise management to make (or cooperate with another authority to make) an application for Commonwealth grant funds under the \$200m [Urban Rivers and Catchments Program](#). Stage 2 grant applications close 13 February 2024.

In the City of Melbourne the Moonee Ponds Creek passes three major urban renewal areas, all low lying flood prone land. From north to south these are Macaulay, Arden and Docklands. The City of Melbourne’s 2022 City Vision forecasts the following populations for these urban renewal areas:

Area	2020 residents	2040 residents	2020 workers	2040 workers
Macaulay	2,725	9,311	2,821	7,517
Arden	441	5,061	1,761	9,896
Docklands	16,035	29,791	66,250	91,002
Total	19,201	44,163	70,832	108,415

To cater for these new populations, structure plans for Macaulay and Arden have identified major open space improvements that will also act to manage floodwater. The general location of new open space serving these dual functions is shown in the respective structure plans, reproduced at attachment 2 of this notice.

The land ownership arrangements for the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor are complicated. It has always been understood that improving the creek and realising the public open space needs of future populations would require serious investment by multiple levels of Government working in cooperation.

The City of Melbourne adopted a [Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan](#) in August 2019 in collaboration with various stakeholders and the Victorian Planning Authority. Central to that Strategic Opportunities Plan was a new commitment to Council-State collaboration. The City of Melbourne and the Victorian Planning Authority mutually agreed that the first task in implementing the Strategic Opportunities Plan was the creation of a Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan owned by State Government, to provide clarity over the scope and timing of works to be committed. The Victorian Planning Authority is understood to have [delivered the plan to Government in December 2019](#) but no decision to adopt a draft or final Implementation Plan has been made. The Planning Minister wrote to the Lord Mayor in June 2023, responding to a request from the City of Melbourne for an update, to say that the Government is still reviewing the draft Implementation Plan and that the Department of Transport and Planning officers would be in contact with Council officers as work progresses. No such contact has yet been made.

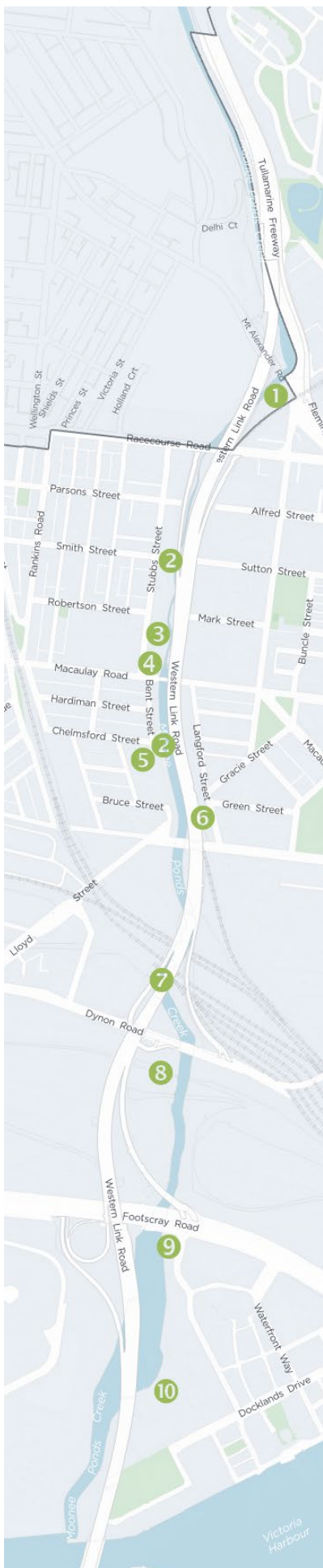
A range of other open space improvement projects also require State Government authorisation to progress: Council has been waiting for a response on its application for a community lease on VicTrack land next to the creek and Macaulay Rd since November 2019; the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail in Docklands has been closed since November 2020 to cater for the expansion of the Docklands Studios but without any clear timeline or approved budget to reinstate it; and the Macaulay Development Contributions Plan controls to deliver improvements to the creek corridor have been awaiting Ministerial authorisation to be exhibited since June 2022 – exhibition being just the first stage in a long planning scheme amendment process.

Without progress on open space improvements, Macaulay, Arden and Docklands populations will continue to quickly grow but without the flood mitigation and recreation opportunities to keep those populations safe and healthy.

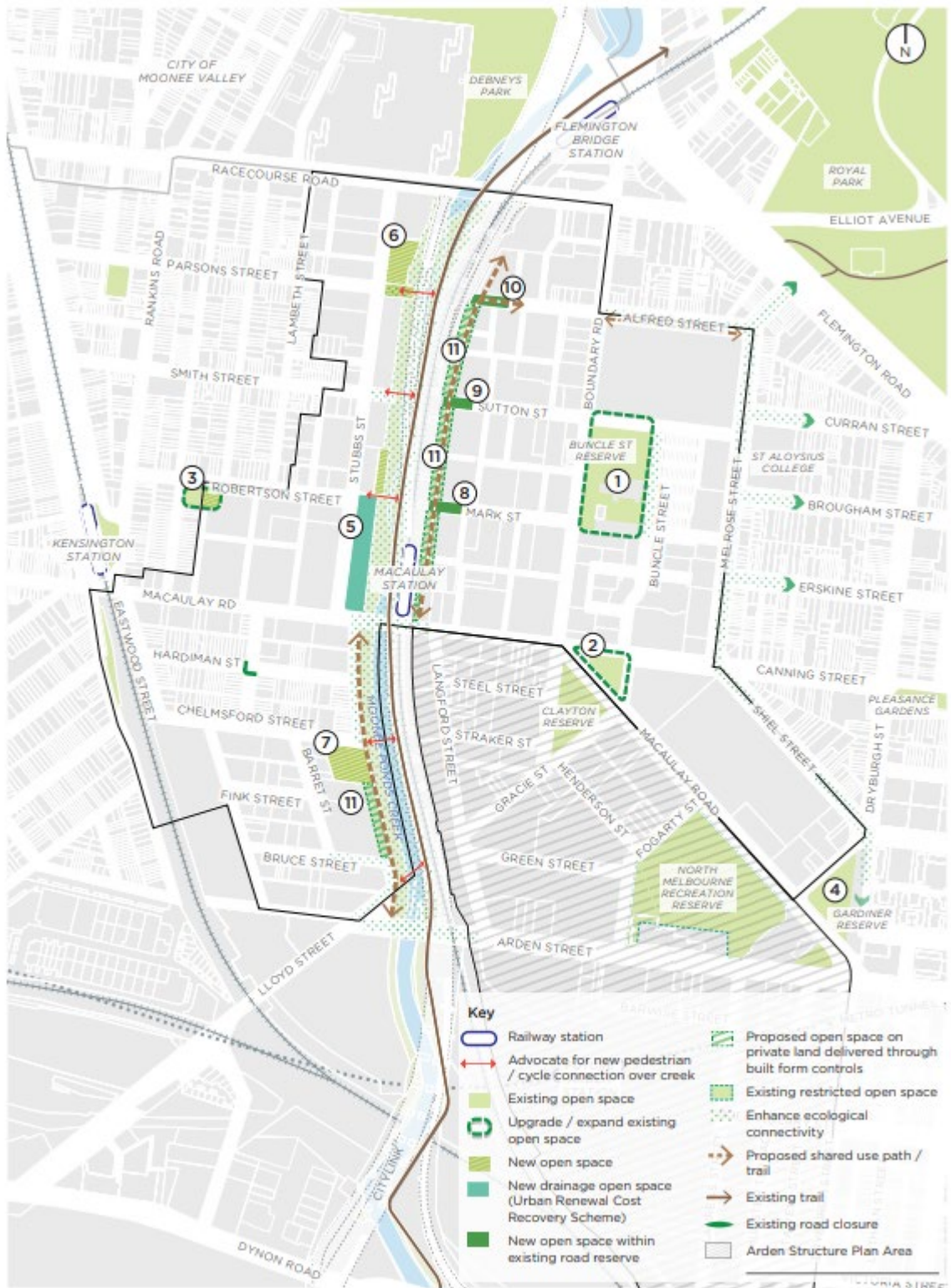
This motion seeks to package together updates on the various projects in one place, to acknowledge the scale of the problem of disjointed governance and to bring Council’s advocacy activities into the public realm. If the motion is agreed, the report to this Committee in March 2024 will provide an important and public opportunity to renew commitment across levels of Government to deliver the open space improvements that have been identified as essential for the success of urban renewal in Macaulay, Arden and Docklands.

Mover: Cr Rohan Leppert

Seconder: Cr Davydd Griffiths



- 1 Commonwealth funding for Moonee Ponds Creek restoration**
 Lead: Commonwealth Government.
 Authorisation: [Election promise](#). No funds yet earmarked for City of Melbourne section. Applications for Round 2 grants of \$150k-\$10m under the [Urban Rivers and Catchments Program](#) will close on 13 February 2024.
- 2 Active transport bridge/s plan**
 Lead: City of Melbourne.
 Authorisation: City of Melbourne [Annual Plan](#) 2023-24 page 31: "Develop a prioritisation and delivery plan for two new pedestrian and bicycle crossings of the Moonee Ponds Creek." Originally from [Macaulay Structure Plan](#), Action 36.
- 3 Macaulay Development Contributions Plan controls**
 Lead: City of Melbourne.
 Authorisation: Melbourne Planning Scheme [Amendment C417](#). Includes DCP for open space and drainage infrastructure. Endorsed June 2022 and still awaiting Ministerial authorisation for exhibition.
- 4 VicTrack land transfer or community lease**
 Lead: City of Melbourne.
 Authorisation: [Macaulay Structure Plan](#), Objective 13. City of Melbourne first requested a community lease on VicTrack land in November 2019. Frequent requests for progress have gone unanswered.
- 5 Chelmsford Street local park**
 Lead: City of Melbourne.
 Authorisation: City of Melbourne [Annual Plan](#) 2023-24 page 32: "Planning for the draft concept plan for open space in Chelmsford Street, Kensington, including the first round of community engagement." Originally from [Macaulay Structure Plan](#), Objective 13.
- 6 Arden integrated stormwater management open space**
 Lead: Development Victoria.
 Authorisation: [Arden Structure Plan](#), Strategies 21.3, 21.5, 21.6, 21.8 and 26.2.
- 7 Creek hard rubbish and litter collection program**
 Lead: Chain of Ponds Collaboration (Melbourne Water).
 Authorisation: Funded by City of Melbourne Budget 2023-24 (see [public submission](#) on purpose of project page 41).
- 8 Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan**
 Lead: Victorian Planning Authority.
 Authorisation: State Government commitment. Implementation Plan has been [under consideration](#) by Government since December 2019.
- 9 West Gate Tunnel Project local trees replacement**
 Lead: West Gate Tunnel Project.
 Authorisation: Letter from Treasurer to Acting LM February 2018 commits to tree replacement ratio of 5:1 inside each affected municipality.
- 10 Trail reinstatement in Docklands**
 Lead: Development Victoria.
 Authorisation: Onus is on [Development Victoria](#) to replace the trail, removed for Docklands Studios expansion.



Map 12: Open space opportunities in Macaulay



Arden Structure Plan 2022, page 62