

YEA COMMUNITY PLAN 2020



YEA

**OUR
FUTURE
VISION**

We respectfully acknowledge the Taungurung People, their elders past, present and emerging in Yea and beyond, recognising their deep connections with the land and waters in this area.

Yea is a beautiful place to live where we feel safe, supported and connected, and where we care for our environment and community.



Credit: R. Wealands



OUR HISTORY.

The local Aboriginal clan, Waring-illam-balluk of the Taungurung people of the Kulin Nation, have lived on this land for 60,000+ years and their descendants still have strong connections with this land and the Yea and district community.

1824 Explorers Hamilton Hume and William Hovell were the first European men to traverse this area. They described the local country as “Lightly timbered. In all our travels I have seen no country better adapted for feeding sheep, the hills being nearly clear of timber and grass to the top”.

They named our river The Muddy Creek and the early settlement was known by this name.

1837 The first settlers, five young men known as the ‘Goulburn Mob’, overlanded from Goulburn in NSW and took up enormous squatter’s runs.

1855 Thomas Pinniger was sent to survey the Muddy Creek settlement, which was then re-named ‘Yea’ after Colonel Lacey Walter Giles Yea, a hero of the Crimean War who was killed-in-action as the new township was being surveyed.

1857 Early reports of some gold in the area but not until 1859 was payable gold found in the Yea area

1860 The first Yea State School No 699 was opened. Before this, school was held in a tent.

1868 St Luke’s church opened, and now acknowledged by National Trust Victoria

1873 Yea Roads Board elected; the precursor of the Yea Shire Council. They lobbied state parliament for a railway to the town as roads and rivers became impassable in winter.

1875 Yea Flora Fossils were first noticed on Limestone Road, Yea, by Dr Isabel Cookson and in 1935 were identified as being from the genus Baragwanathia from 415 million years ago (when Australia was still part of Gondwanaland), the oldest flora fossil in the world.

In 1996, the site was added to the Australian National Heritage list.

1882 Construction began on the railway line from Tallarook to Yea and was completed in record time by late 1883.

1891 Dairying was a major industry in the district and the Yea Dairy Company was incorporated. By 1905 it was producing 24 tons of butter per week. The company operated under the “Sheoak” brand and at peak production was buying two million

pounds of milk each year, drawing supplies from 16 creameries throughout the district and exporting to England.

1891 Site reserved for Yea Show yards and recreation ground, with the first Yea Show held in 1918.

1890 – 1900 Yea Bowling Club, Cricket Club, Football Club, Tennis Club and Rifle Club established and each allotted ground for their various activities.

1900 Yea Racecourse established on present site. Previous track in a paddock 5 miles from town.

1905 Butter Factory began in current premises.

1907 Seven sawmills were operating in the district including two in the Yea township. Over 2.5 million feet of timber was sent out of the district between 1907 and 1925. The mills in the township continued until 1960 and the last mill in the Murrindindi Forest operated until 2019.

1925 Electric power established in Yea and a gala ‘switch on’ was held at Shire Hall in 1926

1928 Yea won the ‘Ideal Town’ competition and Yea Shire Council commissioned a town fountain with the prizemoney.

1948 Yea Centenary week held to raise funds to establish the Yea & District Memorial Hospital.

1957 Yea Swimming Pool built from community fundraising and by volunteer workmen.

1968 Yea Civic Centre officially opened incorporating Council offices, courthouse, town library, baby health centre and pre-school.

1978 The Tallarook to Mansfield Railway line closed.

1985 Rosebank Extended Care centre opened after community raises \$180,000 towards cost.

1987 John Cummins Nature Reserve established by Yea Shire Council.

1990 Yea Railway Station declared a Heritage building. Friends of Yea Railway incorporated to begin fundraising to restore derelict station and railway yards to community park.

1993 Shire of Yea built new livestock saleyards in Flat Lead Lane. They have become a highly successful regional selling centre for central Victoria.

1994 Yea Shire Hall Centenary celebrated. Original hall had an imposing façade with timber ‘country’ hall behind. Several renovations and extensions over the years.



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1999 Yea River Wetlands officially opened by Mr Malcolm Reid, President of the Gould League Society of Victoria.

2002 Rosebank extended to include Nursing Home facility after the Yea community raised \$110,000 towards costs.

2006 Naming of the Franklin Track in the Wetlands, in honour of local Aboriginal man “John Franklin” and his family of twelve children and his contribution to Yea’s early history. Acknowledging the important ecological and cultural links between Indigenous communities and the environment.

2011 Yea became an internationally accredited Cittaslow town. Cittaslow Towns take the time to slow down, enjoy and appreciate a quality lifestyle.

2014 Opening of Y Water Discovery Centre and accredited Visitor centre. Two full time shire employees and staffed by volunteers, with a Committee of Management including Taungurung representation.

2016 NAIDOC celebrations were first held at the Y Water Discovery Centre to celebrate and share Taungurung culture and knowledge with the local community and visitors, and has continued each year since.

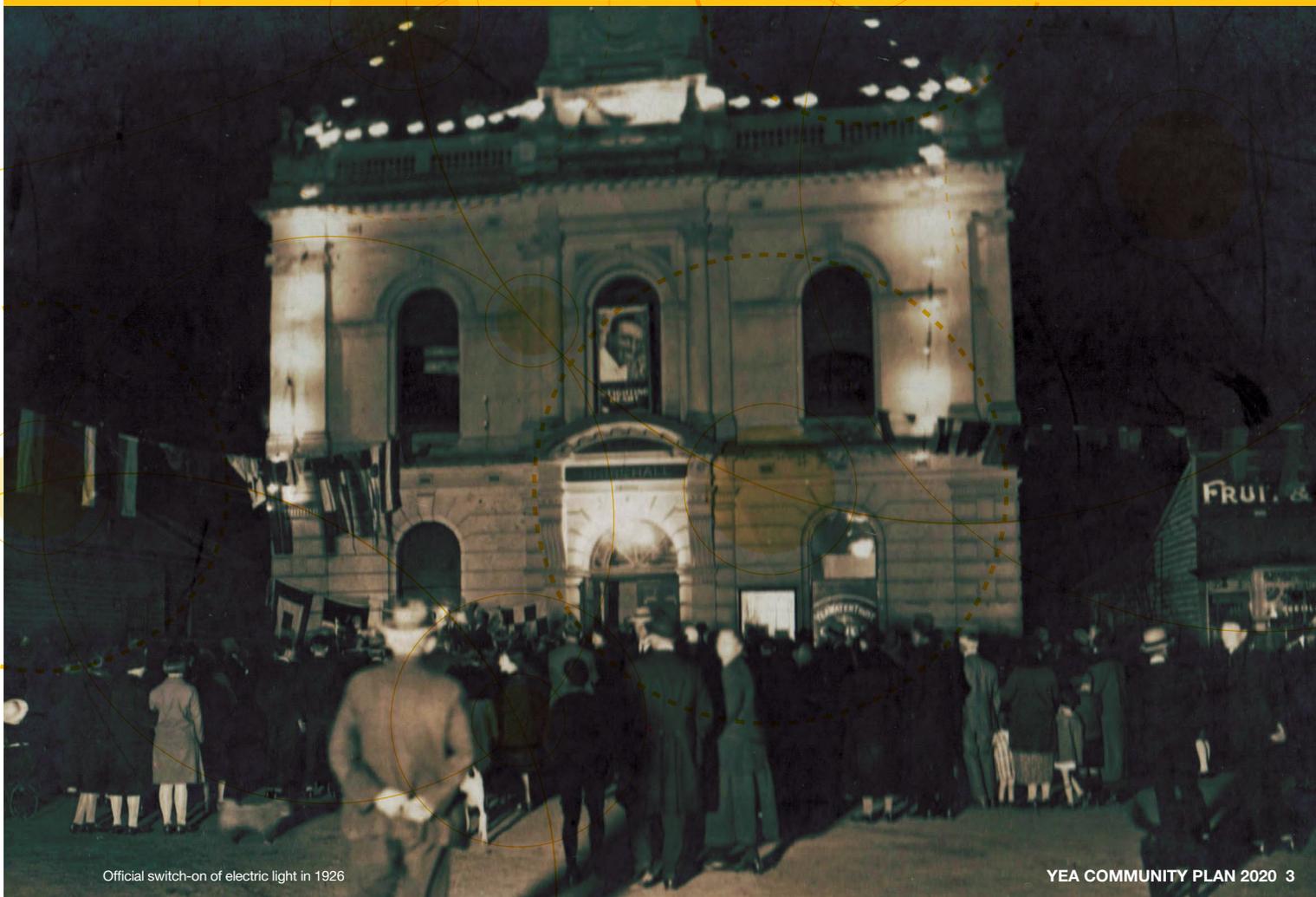
2017 Indigenous garden “Badji Baanang” officially opened at Y Water Discovery Centre.

Major floods caused devastation throughout the district in 1844, 1884, 1889, 1930, 1934 (the 100-year-flood benchmark) and 1973. The building of the Eildon Dam has mitigated this catastrophic flooding.

Many major bushfires have swept through various parts of the district destroying forestry, homes, outbuildings, fences and livestock. The township of Yea was seriously threatened in 1900 and 1969.

In 2009, devastating fires raged through the whole of the Southern part of the shire with enormous loss of lives and homes.

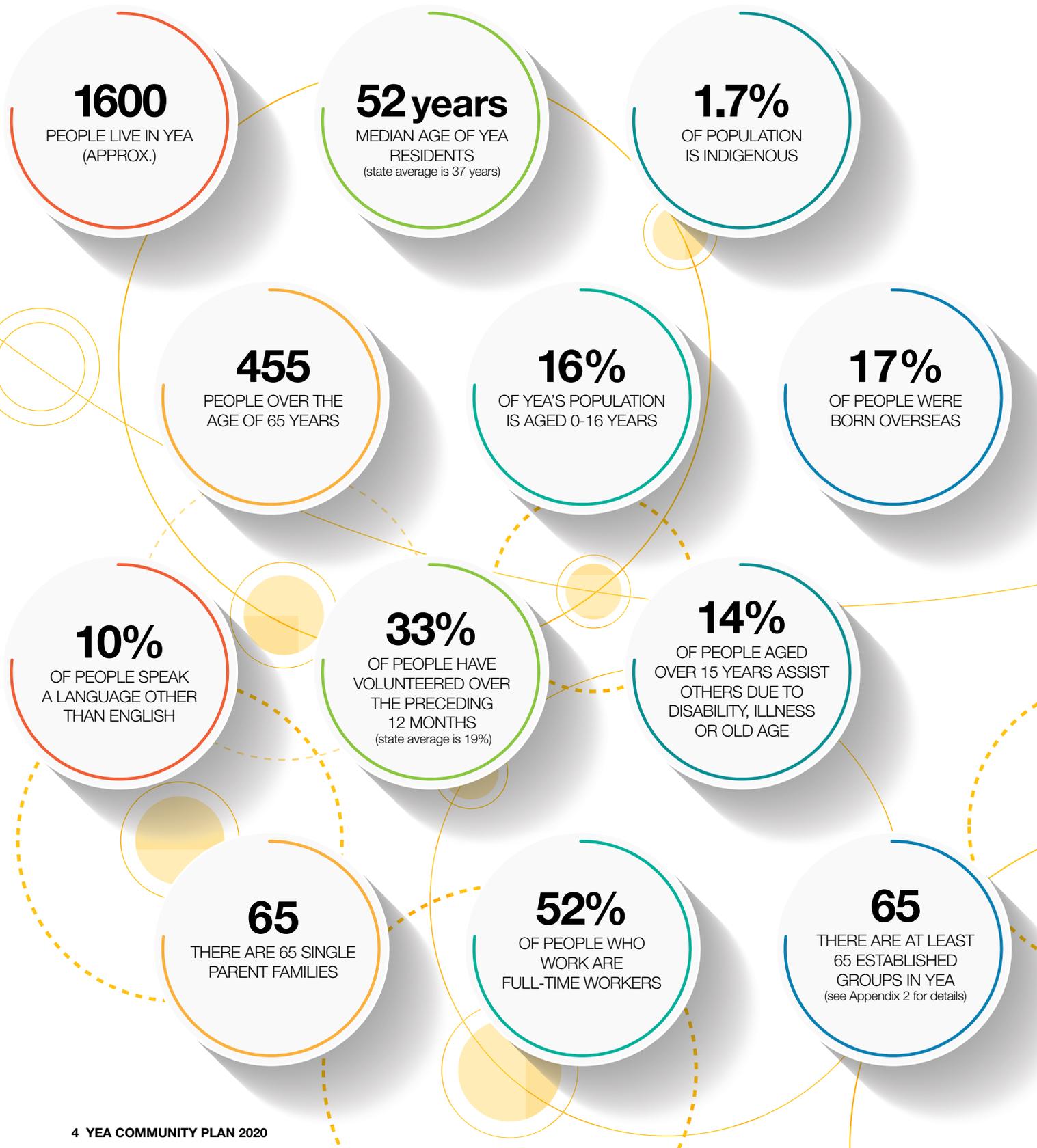
**This brief history is a collection of input from various community members, drawing upon a number of sources including the Rotary History and Murrindindi Heritage Vol 1.*



Official switch-on of electric light in 1926

WHO ARE WE?

2016 ABS DATA FOR YEA.





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HOW WE GOT HERE.

THE COMMUNITY PLANNING STORY.

In May 2019, 80 people attended the launch of Yea Community Planning at a dinner at Beaufort Manor.

Community groups and organisations actively involved since that time include:

Yea Rotary Club, Y Water Centre and Wetlands Committees, Taungurung Land and Waters Council, Cittaslow, Yea RSL, Yea Community House, Scripture Union of Victoria, St Luke's Anglican Church, Yea Football and Netball Club, Yea Arts Inc., Yappers, Yea Historical Society, Yea market, and Nexus Primary Health.

The Core Planning Group (10–20 members) met approximately monthly in the second half of 2019. Sub-group meetings have explored the arts, environment and heritage.

The Community Planning Steering Group (6 members) met monthly from late 2019 through to early 2020, to steer the final prioritisation process and drafting of the Community Plan.

In February 2020, a dinner was held at the Yea Shire Hall to bring community members together to prioritise the top projects that would make the most difference to Yea.

Almost 60 community members attended. From 118 potential project ideas, 11 priorities emerged and related Action Teams were formed by volunteers from the community.

These are the priority projects that are included below. The full list of project ideas raised is included as Appendix 1.

PRIORITY PROJECTS.

11 PROJECTS WITH LOCAL ACTION TEAMS.

- **Better community communications** including various ways of communicating community activities and events, as well as bringing people together
- **Interaction with the Yea Streetscape plan** including providing further guidance on maintenance and painting in the main street
- **A local museum** finding a home for the historical society
- **Aquatic services** advocating and investigating options for improved services, including a heated pool.
- Establishment of a **retirement village**.
- **2030Yea** Encouraging local energy projects to make Yea totally renewable by 2030, including development of a local micro-grid to enable local sharing and trading of renewable power.
- **Honouring the Taungurung people and their role in Yea's history and future** including support of local Indigenous research and developing information and signage.
- **Wetlands management** including expansion of southern wetlands and ring of elms, supporting community hub and implementation of Yea Wetlands master plan.
- **Creating an arts hub** including investigating the possibility of activating the Shire Hall or elsewhere as an arts hub.
- **Creating a Yea town group or Consultative Committee** including representatives from all community sectors, to advise Council and other organisations.
- **Advocacy for improved road safety** including the possibility of reducing speed limits through town, improved pedestrian crossings, more footpaths and other safety improvements.

THINGS WE LOVE.



'Beautiful natural environment; wetlands!'



'Yea is a Cittaslow town'



'Warm and friendly; great community'



'Country 'feel' and convenience'



'The park in the centre of main street'



'Cultural heritage of the Taungurung'



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'Big enough to be a well-serviced community and small enough to know and be known'



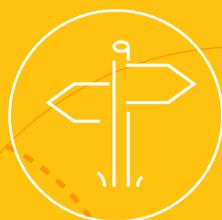
'No poker machines'



'Positive ethos of town centre and layout'



'Good place to retire'

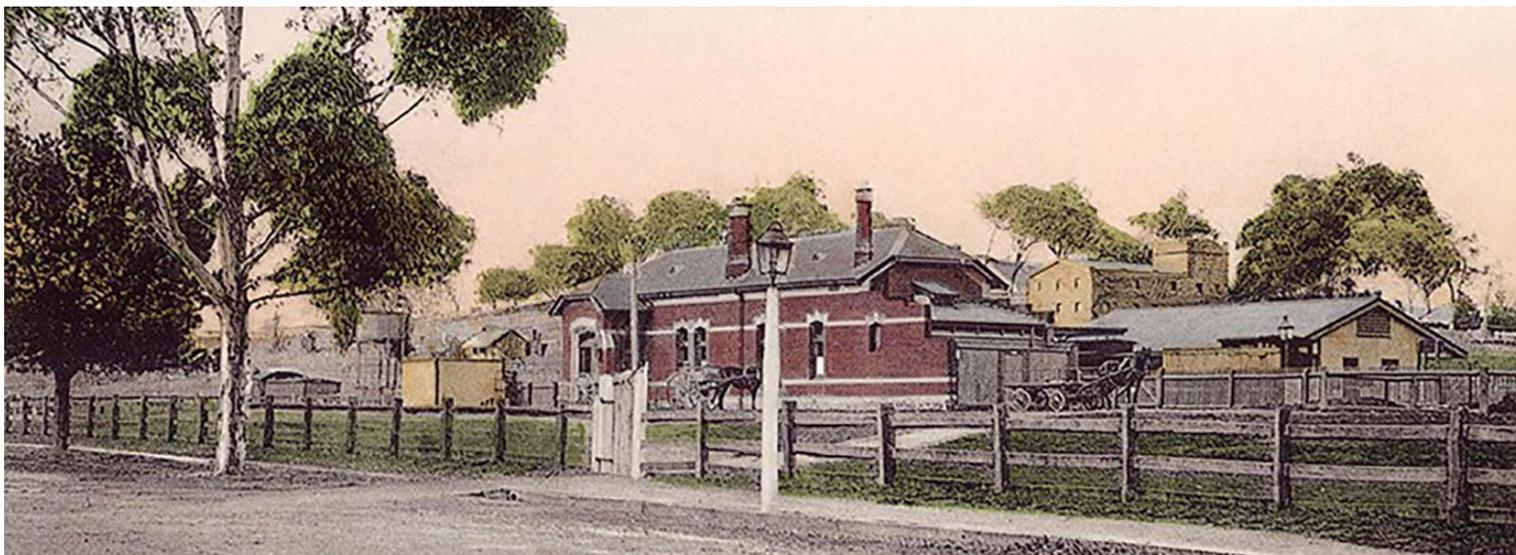


'Central to the Murrindindi Shire'



'Proximity to Melbourne yet far enough away'

OUR COMMUNITY.





Credit: R. Wealands



APPENDIX 1.

ALL PROJECT IDEAS.

The following list contains all the project ideas that Yea community members contributed during the community planning process.

- Restore water fountain
- Establish simple volunteer fruit-picking system
- More activities for senior citizens, especially those (14) using mobility scooters
- Varied activities for youth/children
- Establish a night-time photography group
- African Drumming Circle
- Dance classes
- Driver Reviver Program on public holidays (via contact with SES)
- Rebuild bandstand and rose garden
- Charging Station for electric cars
- Charging points in café for mobility scooters
- Fenced dog park
- Community networking – meet and greet events
- Advocacy group for ban on glyphosates - establish
- Watch-dog group for monitoring extensive farming eg along creeks – establish
- Advocacy for better use of river to junction of the Goulburn. Could include cooperating with Y Water, fishing groups, GBCMA, Landcare, etc
- Town compost and bio digester
- Protect native vegetation, including old-growth forests - advocacy
- Protect heritage trees such as red gums - advocacy
- Improve Constitution Hill: track, lookout, astronomy
- Refund service of bottles and cans - advocacy
- More green places - advocacy
- Promote green living – promotion, education, advocacy
- Protection of farming land - advocate for less subdivision
- Strengthening the Yea Agricultural Show which could include amalgamating the Yea and Alexandra shows
- Cemetery work – establishing location of graves of Taungurung people, and the possibility that they may be outside cemetery boundary and upgrading historical graves, also fencing re-done
- Historical street signage and a walk with the Taungurung story included within it
- Connect history to other tourism assets

- Review local place-names and signage, including re-considering the use of names of past colonialists
- Develop the Long Walking Trail for walking gently - following a path from Toolangi to Yea and Marysville via rivers, forests, billabongs, mountains. Marking indigenous and non-indigenous places of cultural/spiritual significance.
- Protect existing Heritage buildings
- Soldiers memorial: provide maintenance and could be relocated for safety at big events and easier traffic management
- Record the stories of older residents
- Hold a regular historic café get-together – to invite stories and artefact sharing
- Support more economic development
- Hold annual ‘think-tanks’ on rural job development: “Creative Ideas Forums”
- Greater links with business
- Encourage environmentally sensitive industry and eco-tourism
- Bulk food shop – establish or build on existing resources
- Further develop star-gazing for astro-tourism
- Further develop nature-based tourism
- Refresher on Cittaslow video ‘What We Love about Yea’
- Advocacy for improved signage and parking including:
 - Signs for caravans getting off the main road
 - Improved signs for parking
 - More parking on vacant block for lease
 - Clearer signage around town generally
- Support the Community Bank
- RV camping at Rec Reserve
- Gardens and street planting improvements including on main street and median strips and railway reserve
- Improve signage and walks at Wilhelmina Falls, near Murrindindi
- Tours of the hills
- Open the Gate event – celebrating hobbies and other interests
- Greater coordination of groups to improve capacity and capability
- More resources to support activities of Yea Community House
- Community coordinator: recruit and support volunteers, all groups, share info etc
- Groups working together to share resources
- Calendar of community events
- Representative youth voice
- Community Challenge billboard, showcasing community groups - to create healthy rivalry

- Revive Neighbourhood Watch
- U3A
- Volunteer succession planning
- Community House to manage Shire Chambers
- Farmers' market
- Halfway house for people exiting jail with 24 hour access & support
- Relocatable homes for homeless people
- Advocacy for more medical services, including psychiatric, drug and alcohol services
- Pioneer Reserve - increase usage
- Advocacy for online learning options for rural young people – to keep them local Combined with Advocacy for flexible learning options (pathways beyond high school for local youth)
- Community (training) café: provide employment and training for young people
- Community education foundation
- Advocacy for 24 hour police
- Advocacy for improved waste management - including green waste
- Advocacy for better transport options:
 - more buses
 - train to Melbourne
 - development of a community transport hub
 - local public transport
- Increase the profile of Nexus and other services already available
- Gym: Youth or all-ages
- Coordinated whole-of-town sports club:
 - Sports training for young people
 - Mountain bike track
 - Volleyball team
- Advocacy related to the Rail Trail:
 - clearer bike track through Railway Reserve and the middle of town
 - improved signage
 - seal most popular sections
- Advocacy to improve the Railway Reserve including a climbing wall, sand and water and 360 degree spinning
- Upgrade Rec Reserve
- Explore uses for land behind Pioneer Reserve
- Utilise racecourse reserve more
- Seal the road to Cheviot tunnel
- Toilets and picnic tables at Cheviot tunnel
- Support for events in High St gardens
- Coffee festival (with so many cafes)
- Music festivals
- Town orchestra
- Outdoor community stage
- Art gallery

- Advocacy related to the Shire Hall
 - seal community usage more affordable/free
 - seal facade works and upgrade, activation
- Support Yea Arts more and cooperation between Yea Arts and performances
- More visual arts programs: Life drawing, watercolour painting etc.
- Grow the existing Garden Expo
- Public art: sculpture and other art in main street
- Advocacy for Council to remove barriers for events such as expensive OH&S and insurance
- Philosophy classes
- Community Cinema (Shire Hall or mobile)
- Make Yea a Wellness Town – a destination
- Support young people to eat healthily and be more physically active
- A mental health shop (like Juniper and Lamplight in Montmorency)
- Community meals
- Yea Welcome Pack including linking new people online
- More footpaths for improved accessibility
- Advocacy for more streetlights
- Community bushfire preparedness.
- Support and Services for disadvantaged. eg. People experiencing family violence, mental health concerns, people with disability and their carers, PTSD
- Programs for men including Ex-soldiers
- Youth group
- Advocacy for a full-detour of Yea or night-time truck curfew
- Better community communication
- Interaction with the Yea Streetscape Plan
- A local museum
- Aquatic services
- Retirement village
- Renewable energy
- Honouring the Taungurung
- Wetlands management
- Creating an arts hub
- Creating a Yea town group/consultative committee
- Advocacy for improved road safety

APPENDIX 2.

YEA COMMUNITY GROUPS.

List of Yea's current community groups. (Please note that this list is not exhaustive – rather, it was as accurate as the Steering Group could manage during the preparation of the Yea Community Plan).

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Yea Football Netball Club
Yea Golf Club
Yea Tigers Swimming Club
Yea Tigers Cricket Club
Yea Bowls Club
Yea Tennis Club
Yea Fishing Club
Yea Table Tennis Club
Tai Chi (Pioneer Reserve)

SERVICE CLUBS

Rotary Club of Yea
RSL
Legacy
Yea Primary P&F
Sacred Heart School P&F
CFA

RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS

Anglican – St Luke's
Roman Catholic – Sacred Heart
Yea Presbyterian Church

SENIORS ACTIVITY GROUPS

Probus

ENVIRONMENTAL

Yea Wetlands Committee
Yea Wetlands Trust
Y Water Discovery Centre Inc
Yellow Creek-Dairy Creek Landcare
Yea River Catchment Landcare
Garden Club
Yea Birders
Yea Bee Club
2030 Yea

ART/CRAFT

Yea Yakkers (Quilters)
Highlands Spinners
Pottery Club
Men's Shed
Camera Club
UFO (Unfinished Objects)

DRAMA/ MUSIC

Yappers
Yea Arts Inc
Platform Youth
Yea & Highlands Piper & Drums
Murrindindi Film Society

TOURISM

Y Water Discovery Centre

WALKING/ HIKING/ DANCE/ EXERCISE

Power Pals
Line Dancing groups x 3
Ballroom Dancing

COMMUNITY

Yea Community House
Yea Market Committee
Yea Agricultural Show
Yea Recreation Reserve Committee
Yea Progress Association
CWA
Yea Community meal

HISTORY/ WRITING

Yea Historical Society
Genealogy (Yea Library)

BOOKS/ LIBRARIES

3 x Book Groups
Friends of the Library (Bookshop)

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Town Club
Meditation discussion and healing
Cancer Support Group

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Yea Childcare
Yea Youth
Scouts
Buds and Blossoms Rosebank program
PLATFORM Youth Theatre
Play Group

APPENDIX 3.

FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Children from the Yea Primary School provided the following drawings and statements in response to a question about what they love about Yea and what would make Yea even better.

I like that it is fun at Yea and you learn stuff.

I like the pool at Yea and the hardware shop because there is wood there.

I like the Railway Park in Yea because it's fun and it's full of younger kids and older kids.

Yea is a fun place to live!

Most of the people are nice and they will help you in Yea.

It was fun moving to Yea because it has lots of space and I met a lot of people and it's the best place I've ever lived! It's quiet and there are less people driving through. We don't get many tourists, so we have more space.

I like everything about Yea! I like when I go to the Wetlands.

I like that it's a small town and you can taste different foods at the cafes and restaurants. I like how Yea is friendly.

It would be great to add a water park onto the Railway Reserve Park for summer. I would like to extend the skate park, too.

I would like tarmac put on the road that goes from Racecourse Road to the Seymour Road because it has a lot of potholes and some school buses go on it.

I think we should have more rides at the Yea Show.

I like the Wetlands, it is a nice area for walking around.

I would like more seating areas at the Wetlands.

I like the Wetlands because it is calming when you walk through it. I like the wildlife there as well.

I like how people in Yea are nice, because when you say "Hi", they say "Hi" back.

I like how there's a lot of sport available in Yea and how everyone is involved.

I'd like more firetrucks in Yea.

I like how all the roads lead to Yea, it's a great little town to pass through and to get your food.

I like Yea because I have unlimited data in Yea!

I would like a water park in Yea.

I like that there are lots of people – my family and friends. I would like more parks.

I like going to the skate park.

I like the school at Yea. At Yea Primary School you meet friends every day.

I like the Railway Park in Yea, there are lots of things to play on.

I would like a church group for people our age (12 years) and a church for families to go to. I would like a Christian Youth Group.

I like the Railway Park because it has a big swing and a flying fox. I like that the footy oval is big.

I like the Yea Pool, you get to cool down.

I'd like a slide and a diving board at the pool.

I like that Yea is a small town and that everybody knowseach other. I would like more bike paths within Yea.

I like that it's a small town and you know where everything is. I would like more chairs at the Wetlands so you can listen to the birds.

I like that Yea is peaceful.

I like the fountain in Yea because of all the ducks. I like the ducks.

I would like an observatory on Mt Connie.

I like Yea because it has some shops you can look at. I would like the Rec Reserve seats to be fixed.

I like that Yea is a small town and you know everyone and you feel safe.

I like Yea, in Yea there are a lot of restaurants to eat at.

I like the bakery because they have good food.

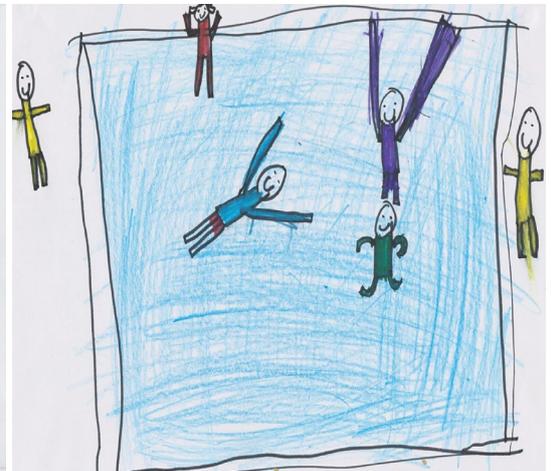
I like the townsfolk because they are good people.

I like the schools because they are friendly.

I like that everyone knows each other. I like the Yea netball/football club.

I like the Yea Pool, it would be better if it was free.

I like that there are lots of animals around Yea.



my favourite thing about Yea is the pool and skatepark

I like fishing at the river in Yea.

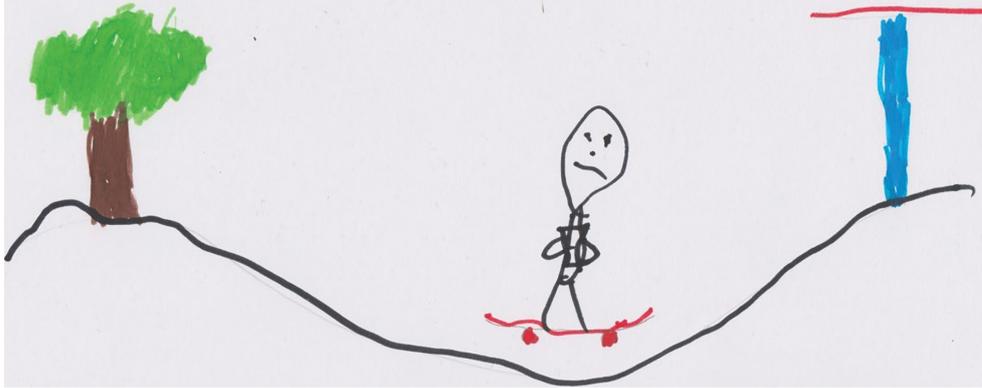


I like the birds in Yea.

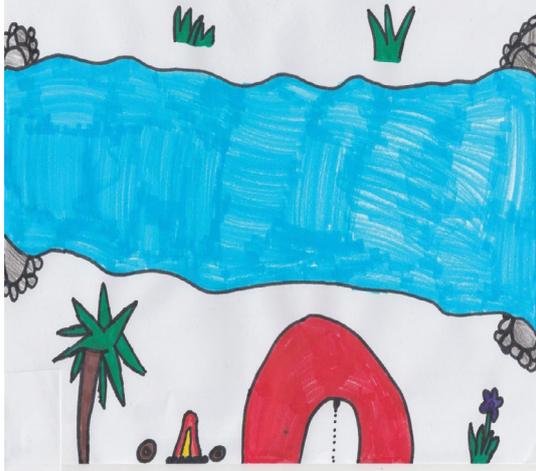


My favourite thing about Yea is the Pool because you learn swimming.

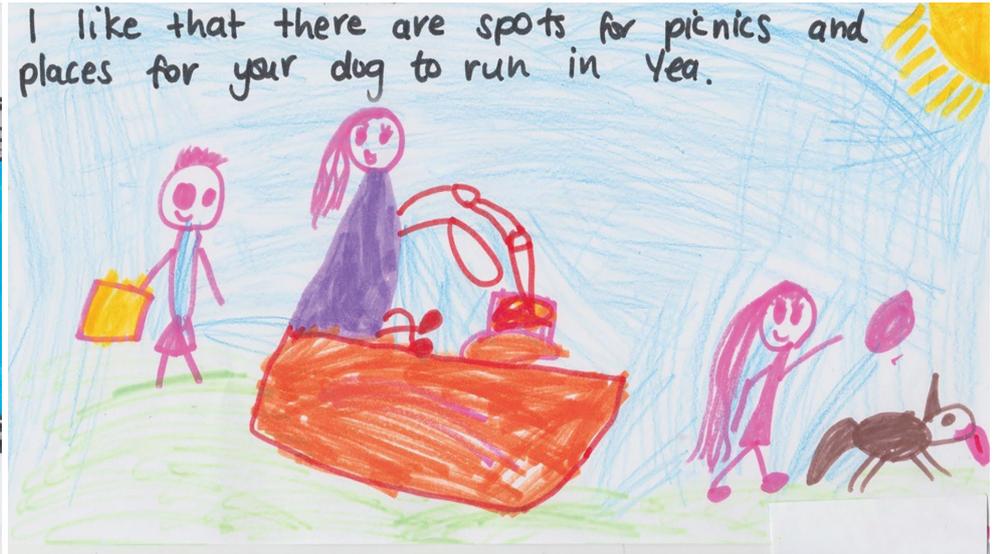
I like the Skate Park.



I like that there is lots of nature in Yea.



I like that there are spots for picnics and places for your dog to run in Yea.



I like that there are lots of animals and trees in Yea.



OUR FOOTPRINT.





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FURTHER INFORMATION

Yea Community House
T. 5797 30 70
E. info@yeahouse.org.au
W. yeahouse.org.au
W. murrindindi.vic.gov.au/communityplanning

This project was supported by Murrindindi Shire Council with generous funding from IAG and their local brand WFI Insurance.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics data 2016:
https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC22909

Blanks, Harvey A 1973, A Story of Yea, Melbourne Hawthorn Press

Grow Well Dindi (formerly RESPOND) is a community-led project to support child health and has some actions that align with this Plan.
<http://lhpcp.org.au/respond/>

Yea Heritage Walk
<https://yea.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Yea-Heritage-Walk-Brochure-23Aug.pdf>

Pg.1 'Yea township topdown panorama. Jan 2020' by Bob T https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yea_township_vertical_panorama._Jan_2020.jpg Licence at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>

Pg. 16 'Yea Victoria from Above' by Graeme Bartlett <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yea-bal-PB120592.JPG> Licence at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>

