

22.15 GAMING POLICY

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This policy applies to all applications which require a permit to install or use a gaming machine, or use land for the purpose of gaming under clause 52.28.

22.15-1 Policy Basis

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Clause 52.28 of the Yarra Planning Scheme requires a planning permit be granted to use or install electronic gaming machines (EGMs). This policy will guide decision making by implementing the findings of the Yarra City Council Gaming Policy Framework.

The policy is based on an understanding that there are links between disadvantage, problem gambling and proximity to gaming venues. The Yarra City Council Gaming Policy Framework seeks to limit convenient access to gaming venues as a means to reducing negative impacts of gambling on vulnerable communities.

The policy implements the objectives and strategies of the Municipal Strategic Statement by ensuring that gaming machines do not cause a negative impact, and has its basis in the SEIFA Index of Relative Disadvantage in determining appropriate locations for gaming machines in the City of Yarra.

22.15-2 Objectives

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- To discourage the location of gaming machines in disadvantaged areas.
- To ensure that the location of gaming machines and the design of gaming machine venues minimises the risks associated with electronic gaming and avoid exacerbating problem gambling.
- To discourage convenience gaming and limit impacts on surrounding uses.
- To ensure applications for gaming deliver a net community benefit in Yarra.

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It is policy to ensure proposals for gaming machines deliver a net community benefit.

Assessment of Net community benefit

In determining whether there will be an overall net community benefit of the gaming application the responsible authority will assess its positive and negative implications in relation to the following:

- The socio-economic profile and patron catchment of the area within 1km of the venue.
- Location of the venue in relation to nearby land uses and transport facilities;
- The availability of other entertainment and recreation facilities within 1km of the venue and at the venue.
- The social and economic impacts of the proposal.
- The distribution and density of gaming machines in the neighbourhood and municipality.
- If the gaming machines are to be relocated from within the municipality, the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the two locations.

Location criteria

It is policy to locate gaming machines in accordance with the following criteria.

Gaming machines should not be located:

- In areas where gaming is discouraged as shown on Map 1 to this policy.
- In or immediately opposite neighbourhoods with a relatively high concentration of gaming machines (above the Victorian average).
- Where there is convenient access to places of high pedestrian activity, including shops and railway stations.
- Where the local community will not have a reasonable choice of alternative non-gambling activities either within the venue, or in close proximity to the venue.

Venue characteristics/appropriate venues

It is policy to ensure that gaming machines are located in venues which:

- Offer social, entertainment and recreational opportunities and activities other than gaming as the primary purpose of the venue.
- Have a gaming floor area of less than 25% of the total floor area of the venue.
- Promote responsible gaming practices.
- Do not allow for 24 hour-a-day operation.

It is policy to ensure that the operations of gaming venues and associated uses do not detrimentally affect the amenity of the surrounding area through their:

- Operating hours.
- Management of patrons.
- Generation of noise and disturbance.

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Application requirements

It is policy to require applications to include:

- The proposed design and layout of the premises including all signage.
- A venue management plan identifying strategies to manage patron behaviour and minimise problem gambling in relation to the design and management of the venue, including the applicant's responsible gaming practices. Evidence of compliance with the relevant gaming regulations for premises layout and design
- An assessment of the social and economic benefits and disadvantages of the proposed gaming machines comprising:

Socio-economic impact

- An analysis of the venue's projected patron catchment and its socio-economic profile. The analysis should include justification and details of the projected catchment area.
- If it is proposed to move EGMs from one part of the municipality to another, details of the relative social and economic differences between the two areas. An explanation as to why the EGMs are being transferred is to be provided.

Location assessment

- Characteristics of the local area including the location of and distance to shopping complexes and strip shopping centres, community facilities, public housing, counselling services and public transport.
- Details of existing and proposed gambling and non-gambling related entertainment and recreation facilities and activities at the venue and within 1km of the venue.

- If required, pedestrian counts outside the venue.

Gaming machine impacts

- Details about the existing and proposed distribution and density of EGMs in the municipality and its neighbourhoods.
- Details of existing gaming expenditure at the venue over a 3 year period prior to the application (if relevant) and a one year forecast of the anticipated expenditure at the venue if the proposal was to be approved.
- If EGMs are to be relocated from other venues, and as a result gaming expenditure is likely to be transferred from other venues:
 - particulars as to how the level of transfer has been calculated (including, but not limited to, comparison per machine expenditure at the venue prior to and then after the additional machines, current usage levels of machines at the venue, projected usage level of machines at the venue after the additional machines);
 - the amount of transfer expenditure anticipated;
 - the resulting impact on revenue of the venue from where the expenditure is transferred; and
 - the resulting impact on the venue from where the expenditure is transferred (such as loss of employment, loss of complementary expenditures, loss of customers, impact on ability to provide services etc).

Benefits

- Details of the nature and extent of community benefits expected from the proposal and how the benefits are to be secured and distributed to the local community.

Analysis

- Assessment of key social and economic issues and overall net community impact.
- Measures to mitigate any negative impacts.

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Decision Guidelines

Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority will consider as appropriate:

- Whether the proposal increases EGM densities in the neighbourhood and how that increase affects the local community and compares with the metropolitan Melbourne average.
- The net community benefit to be derived from the application.
- Whether approval is likely to increase the socio-economic disadvantage of the local community.
- Whether the location of the gaming machines or gaming premises is close to places of community congregation and will encourage convenience gaming.
- Whether patrons will have a choice of non-gambling entertainment and recreation activities at the venue or within the local area.
- The impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area and surrounding land uses.

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References

Coomes Consulting Group, Yarra City Council Gaming Policy Framework, 2008

Policy Map 1

