

CPTED Audits

Parks / Playgrounds and Public Toilets

Xyst conducted the individual assessments for three park playground locations, and three public toilet conveniences across the district.

Xyst provided Council with a report of CPTED assessment points, including photos of assets and other key pertinent features and commentary of suggested upgrades/recommendations.

Parks Planning Masterclasses

Xyst, in partnership with Recreation Aotearoa, delivered a series of five one-day, in person, parks planning masterclasses across Aotearoa, New Zealand in September 2024.

Across the five locations, 117 participants from 34 local government organisations participated in the masterclasses.

The classes were designed for new and experienced parks planners and managers to build practical knowledge of the Reserves Act 1977, reserve classification, reserve management planning and other parks planning tools.

The day included expert-led sessions, real-world case studies, and an interactive Q&A featuring Paul Beverley from law firm Buddle Findlay.

Service Review Assessment

Arboriculture (Tree Section)

Xyst worked with Randwick City Council's management and operational staff involved in the delivery of arboricultural services in the streetscape, identifying areas for improvement, operational excellence and efficiency in service delivery.

Xyst conducted reviews, analysing the procedures and resources used, the asset information, current service levels, relevant policies and procedures and financial data.

In addition, Xyst carried out a cost analysis of services, resourcing, recruitment and career opportunities, the current use of technology and opportunities for additional technology to assist, undertook internal and external stakeholder consultations to identify opportunities for improved services. Xyst then considered service levels and efficiencies to meet customer needs.

Hall Crescent Reserve

Engagement, concept and detailed design

Xyst was commissioned by Hutt City Council to enhance the recreational amenities of the existing reserve following subdivision, with a focus on strengthening connections to the surrounding community.

To ensure the design met local needs, Xyst conducted targeted community engagement with the Epuni neighbourhood and other key stakeholders. This process included stakeholder interviews and a community drop-in session, which informed the development of a draft concept plan. The plan was then shared online for broader community feedback.

The final design introduced new play opportunities, including nature and tunnel play, a high swing, a mini-pump track, and a rebound wall. Accessible pathways were incorporated to improve connectivity between the park and three surrounding streets. Additionally, amenity planting was included to enhance environmental quality and provide shade.

The project advanced to detailed design, with landscape specifications prepared for tender.

Event Strategy

Waikato District Council

Xyst was engaged by Waikato District Council to develop an Event Strategy that provided a clear and coordinated direction for how events are planned, managed, and supported across the district. The completed strategy defined Council's role in events, identified key opportunities and constraints, and ensured alignment with long-term planning goals and community outcomes.

Developed in close collaboration with Council staff, the strategy was informed by a series of workshops and internal

reviews. It clarified event categories and provided a guide to decision-making for future events.

Included in the Strategy was a toolkit for staff to help process event applications.

Bodle Drive Concept Plan

Riversdale Beach

Xyst undertook key stakeholder engagement in the development of the draft concept, followed by wider public consultation through the Placechangers platform.

The feedback helped refine the design, resulting in a concept plan that includes improvements to parking, pedestrian safety, beach access, ecology, shade and shelter, amenities, and way-finding.

The work supports the next phase of planning – including to QS the concept elements to help the Riversdale Community present a business case to Council, as part of the next Annual Plan or Long-term Plan process, to bring the Bodle Drive concept to fruition.

Christie Park Upgrade –

Concept Plan

Xyst reviewed the earlier engagement reports and original designs (prepared by others), along with feedback from the local community board, to rationalise the design while retaining key recreational and amenity elements.

We produced an aerial concept plan, material palette, 3D visualisation and detailed costing estimate.

The result is a refined design that achieves much of the original objectives while keeping within the overall development budget.

Mark Corea

With over 30 years of experience managing horticulture, parks, and open spaces across Singapore and Australia, I have worked in very diverse sectors including tourism, ornamental plant production, landscape construction, municipal and military facility open space maintenance, golf course, university campuses and local government. I'm very passionate about urban forestry and green infrastructure, I bring deep expertise in the parks sector, community engagement, and strategic planning. My strengths lie in fostering customer-centric solutions, driving organisational change, and providing leadership coaching to inspire teams and enhance operational success.

You can contact me for help with

- Procurement, tender evaluation, and contract management
- Service reviews for parks and open spaces,

arboriculture, sports fields, and infrastructure management

- Quality assurance and auditing of parks and open spaces
- Open space capital works and renewal projects
- Tree policies, operational procedures, and management
- University and institutional campus grounds management
- Community and stakeholder relationship management
- Asset management and green infrastructure planning
- Project management and strategic planning
- Reserve and park management planning
- Operational support and service delivery
- Community engagement, stakeholder workshops, and capacity building

My expertise

With extensive industry experience across both temperate and tropical climates, I have developed a deep appreciation and understanding of horticulture and park management across diverse cultural and societal landscapes. My career spans a broad spectrum of roles, including managing a horticultural tourist attraction, overseeing a flower production business, running an indoor plant nursery, and leading large-scale interior and exterior plant display projects. I have also managed landscaping initiatives, municipal and military base maintenance contracts, championship golf courses and resorts, university campus grounds, and parks and open space management in local government.

Over the past eight years in the local government sector, I have had the privilege of working with both an inner-city council (Merri-bek Council) and a rapidly growing peri-urban council (City of Whittlesea). In these roles, I have managed parks and open spaces under two distinct service models—one fully in-house and the other entirely outsourced. These experiences have been invaluable in broadening my industry perspective and deepening my appreciation for the vital role

that well-managed parks and open spaces play in communities.

In addition to my professional roles, I have been instrumental in establishing the Melbourne Park Managers Forum (MPMF)— a local government network designed to foster collaboration and support among park leaders across the sector. I also serve as a Councillor with Parks & Leisure Australia Victoria/Tasmania (PLA VicTas) and have contributed as a board member for both the Merri Creek Management Committee and the Darebin Creek Management Committee, advocating for sustainable waterway management and the preservation of healthy creek ecosystems.

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Science majoring in Biology, National University of Singapore
- Graduate Certificate in Arboriculture, University of Melbourne
- Specialist Certificate in Green Roofs and Green Walls, University of Melbourne
- Diploma of Management, Chifley Business

Accreditations

- Certified Parks & Leisure Professional, Parks & Leisure Australia
- Certified Arborist (Cert No AU-171652), International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), USA.
- Region Awards of Excellence Judge, Parks & Leisure Australia (PLA) – 2018-2025
- Jury member, Landscape Architecture Awards 2022, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Victoria chapter
- IAP2 Australasia's Certificate in Engagement – 2020

Xyst in action

My journey with Xyst began as a client, leveraging their

Yardstick Parks benchmarking platform for over seven years to enhance service delivery, redevelop our parks contracting model, and implement effective parks auditing. This firsthand experience has given me deep insight into what is truly essential for successful park management.

I led a comprehensive review and procurement project for parks service contracts, resulting in the development of new agreements—one of the City's largest procurement initiatives. These contracts were designed to elevate service standards and deliver substantial benefits to the community.

Xyst's commitment to improving parks, open spaces, and community facilities aligns seamlessly with my passion for ensuring these spaces remain vibrant, well-maintained, and integral to the urban fabric.

Drone Aerial Imagery of Parks and Reserves

Xyst completed aerial mapping (using a drone) of rural land and reserves to provide a new orthomosaic image to be used for GIS, planning and future concept plan development (including planting/revegetation options).

Xyst also captured images that provide a 360 spherical view of the reserve and the surrounding land areas, that can be used in council, public and staff meetings.

Landscape Contract

Maintenance

Xyst was engaged by Greater Sydney Parklands (GSP) to prepare the Parklands West Landscape Maintenance Contract.

GSP required a procurement plan, tender documents and a performance-based contract, procured under a two-step EOI and RFT method, all to be completed within a short timeframe.

Xyst began the process by collating current asset data to form contract schedules and specifications, schedules of quantities and pricing estimates with the support of GSP. A procurement strategy was then formed and both contract and tender documentation was created with GSP staff.

Xyst then assisted GSP as they accessed EOI and later RFT responses. A suitable contractor was then identified and negotiations were entered into by GSP.

Tree Maintenance Annual Performance Review

The annual performance review of suppliers was based on pre-determined criteria, such as works quality, communications, public relations and health and safety.

As part of this work Xyst gathered information and facilitated individual reviews. A report was compiled summarising the works undertaken, the outcomes of each suppliers' review, key issues or concerns, and provided recommendations for improving the review process.

Park Service Delivery Audits

Xyst designed a specialised tool for the Yarra City Council, leveraging the Safety Culture iAuditor platform.

This tailored solution facilitates the inspection of areas maintained under the Council's Open Space Maintenance Contract.

All assets were inspected across the full range of park categories and measured for compliance with the relevant KPIs and outcomes detailed in the Open Space Maintenance contract, acting impartially and without bias.

Utilising this platform, Xyst conducted monthly inspections of Reserves and Public Spaces, ensuring adherence to Council's Open Space Maintenance Contract. The tool incorporates specific questions, tailored to meet contract specifications, including health and safety requirements. Additionally, it generates comprehensive summary reports for Council Staff and the Contractor, featuring a final score per site. This scoring system is vital for the City of Yarra Council's reporting and serves as a key mechanism for monitoring contractor Key Performance Indicators.

The information generated through this tool enables systematic monitoring and reporting of contractor performance, ensuring adherence to their contractual obligations. This proactive approach not only cultivates strong contractor relationships but also enables Council staff to identify outstanding maintenance issues that could otherwise be overlooked.

Lake Alexandrina Community Engagement

Xyst was engaged by the Mackenzie District Council to provide management support for the Lake Alexandrina and McGregor Reserves, which over successive years had fallen down the Council's work programme.

Initially, Xyst worked with Council staff to rekindle relationships with community representatives, and to discuss management issues as raised by the community and within a prior Management Report.

Once initial relationships had been established and some early wins achieved, key agencies were introduced to the stakeholder meetings, including DOC, ECAN, FENZ and Fish and Game.

Xyst coordinated these quarterly meetings and worked with Council staff to form an agenda, recording meeting minutes, and action decisions following each meeting. Where required, Xyst moderated meetings and deescalated tensions over sensitive topics, whilst allowing all parties the opportunity to share their views.

Community Engagement and Concept Plan

Hall Crescent Reserve

Xyst gathered feedback and ideas from key stakeholders and the community to inform a draft concept plan.

This phase of engagement involved interviews with key stakeholders and an online survey to the surrounding community. This was advertised via site signage and through a community Facebook page.

Based on the feedback from the first round of engagement, Xyst produced a draft concept plan with improvements for Hall Crescent Reserve. We engaged on the draft concept plan via a community drop-in session, an online survey and direct contact with key stakeholders. Analysing the feedback and working with the client we agreed on appropriate changes to finalise the concept plan and provided high-level costings.

Tararua Reserve Land and Community Buildings Rationalisation

Xyst was engaged to review Tararua District Council's (TDC) land and buildings portfolio to identify opportunities for rationalisation in order to reduce operational expenditure, as directed by the 2024 Long-Term Plan (LTP).

The review encompassed Council-owned community buildings, parks, reserves, and other non-operational land with the primary objective of identifying under-utilised or surplus properties that may be suitable for rationalisation.

The assessment examined property information, constraints, and considerations for potential property disposals and provided recommendations and next steps for rationalisation.