

# Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting  
Tuesday 18 April 2023 at 6:30 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday 18 April 2023 at 6:30 pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and will be [livestreamed via Council's website](#).

**C Lloyd**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# Administrators

Lydia Wilson                      Chair of Council

Peita Duncan                    Administrator

Christian Zahra AM            Administrator

On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Lydia Wilson, Peita Duncan and Christian Zahra AM who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

# Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd                      Chief Executive Officer

Justin O'Meara                Director Planning & Development

Sarah Renner                   Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood                   Director Infrastructure & Environment

Anthony Traill                 Interim Director Community Wellbeing

Frank Joyce                     Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

Janine Morgan                 Executive Manager Public Affairs

Sarah Rowe                      Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO



## Order of Business

The Chief Executive Officer submits the following business:

1	Opening .....	6
1.1	Meeting Opening and Introductions.....	6
1.2	Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement .....	6
1.3	Diversity and Good Governance Statement .....	6
1.4	Attendance .....	6
2	Declarations of Conflict of Interest .....	7
3	Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s.....	7
4	Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters .....	8
4.1	Public Question Time .....	8
4.2	Petitions .....	8
4.2.1	Petition - Nature Strip Trees on Incana Drive Mill Park .....	8
5	Officers' Reports.....	9
5.1	Connected Communities .....	9
5.1.1	Petition - Request to remove trees on nature strips on Harrison Street, Mernda 9	
5.2	Liveable Neighborhoods .....	12
5.3	Strong Local Economy.....	12
5.4	Sustainable Environment.....	12
5.5	High Performing Organisation .....	12
5.5.1	Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework.....	12
5.5.2	Proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for Affordable Housing.....	70
5.5.3	Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Reserve - Garrong Avenue, Wollert	93
5.5.4	Appointment of Council Representation on Organisations and Committees.....	99
6	Notices of Motion.....	123
7	Urgent Business.....	123
8	Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update .....	123
9	Confidential Business .....	123
9.1	Confidential Connected Communities.....	123
9.2	Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods.....	123

9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy .....	123
9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment .....	123
9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation.....	123
9.5.1 Sale of Property under Section 181 of the Local Government Act .....	123
10 Closure.....	123

**Note:**

At the Chair of Council's discretion, the meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

**Question Time:**

During the meeting, the Chief Executive Officer will answer questions from residents and ratepayers. Questions are required to be submitted in writing prior to the advertised commencement time of a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Priority will be given to questions or statements that relate to Agenda items and those submitted prior to 12pm on the day of the Council Meeting. Any questions submitted after 12pm on the day may be read if there is sufficient time and otherwise, will be carried over to the next Council Meeting.

A Question Time form can be downloaded from Council's website and copies of the form are available at the meeting. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow members of the public to present the questions they have submitted to Council.

Council is committed to ensuring that all residents and ratepayers of the municipality may contribute to Council's democratic process and therefore, if you have special requirements, please telephone the Governance Team prior to any Council Meeting on (03) 9217 2170.

## **1 Opening**

### **1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will open the meeting and introduce the Administrators and Chief Executive Officer:

Administrator, Peita Duncan;  
Administrator, Christian Zahra AM; and  
Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will introduce members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Director Planning and Development, Justin O'Meara;  
Director Corporate and Customer Services, Sarah Renner;  
Director Infrastructure and Environment, Debbie Wood;  
Interim Director Community Wellbeing, Anthony Traill;  
Executive Manager Strategy and Insights, Frank Joyce;  
Executive Manager Public Affairs, Janine Morgan; and  
Interim Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO, Sarah Rowe.

### **1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will read the following statement:

*"On behalf of Council, I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

*I would also like to acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging."*

### **1.3 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

The Chair of Council will read the following statement:

*At the City of Whittlesea we are proud of our diversity and the many cultures, faiths and beliefs that make up our community. We strive to be an inclusive welcoming City that fosters active participation, wellbeing and connection to each other and this land. We commit as a Council to making informed decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea now and into the future, to support our community's vision of A Place For All.*

### **1.4 Attendance**

**2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

**3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s**

**Recommendation**

**THAT the following Minutes of the preceding meeting as circulated, be confirmed:**

**Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 21 March 2023.**

## **4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters**

### **4.1 Public Question Time**

### **4.2 Petitions**

#### **4.2.1 Petition - Nature Strip Trees on Incana Drive Mill Park**

A petition has been received from 49 residents requesting Council remove the nature strip trees along Incana Drive, Mill Park and replace these trees as part of Council's Street Tree Renewal program.

#### **Recommendation**

**THAT Council note the petition from 49 residents requesting Council remove the nature strip trees along Incana Drive, Mill Park and replace these trees as part of its Street Tree Renewal program and write to the signatories to inform them that:**

- 1. A report to Council will be prepared for the June 2023 Council Meeting, advising how the petitioners concerns have been addressed.**
- 2. All signatories will be advised of Council's decision following the June 2023 Council Meeting.**



## 5 Officers' Reports

### 5.1 Connected Communities

#### 5.1.1 Petition - Request to remove trees on nature strips on Harrison Street, Mernda

**Responsible Officer:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Author:** Mark Corea, Unit Manager Parks & City Forest Management

##### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request a slight amendment to the Council Resolution for Item 4.2.1 carried at the 21 February 2023 Council Meeting.

##### Brief Overview

A petition requesting Council remove all nature strip trees on Harrison Street and Kilpatrick Street, Mernda was tabled at the 21 February 2023 Council Meeting.

Council resolved that a meeting with the head petitioner will be organised and that a report would be prepared for the April 2023 Council Meeting, advising how the petitioners concerns will be addressed.

##### Recommendation

**THAT Council approve the amendment to the 21 February 2023 Council Resolution, Item 4.2.1, point 3, that a report to Council will be prepared for the May 2023 Council Meeting.**

##### Key Information

Council tabled a petition from 21 residents at the February 2023 Council Meeting, requesting Council remove all nature strip trees on Harrison Street and Kilpatrick Street Mernda.

On 10 March 2023, Council Officers met with head petitioner and residents. During the meeting, new concerns were raised with the key issue being the stability of some trees and the wind tunnel effects, which were reported by three residents. As a result, Council commissioned further root plate stability testing by arboricultural consultants as well as reviewing and addressing other concerns raised at the site meeting.

##### Community Consultation and Engagement

A meeting with the Head Petitioner and residents on 10 March 2023 was attended by Council Officers.

New concerns were raised by the residents at the meeting, including the stability of some of the trees and the wind tunnel effects.

## Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

### Liveable neighbourhoods

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

### Sustainable environment

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green space and address climate change

## Considerations

### Environmental

No Implications

### Social, Cultural and Health

No Implications

### Economic

No Implications

### Financial Implications

The cost is included in the current budget.

## Link to Strategic Risk

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

A pro-active response to petitions enables residents to have their concerns considered and independently evaluated.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Council Officers will advise the lead petitioner of the outcome of the Arborist assessments and when remedial actions will be undertaken to mitigate any risks

### Critical Dates

Nil

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### **Conclusion**

A report will be presented at the May Council Meeting.

**5.2 Liveable Neighborhoods**

Nil reports

**5.3 Strong Local Economy**

Nil reports

**5.4 Sustainable Environment**

Nil reports

**5.5 High Performing Organisation****5.5.1 Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework**

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director Infrastructure and Environment
<b>Author</b>	Jason Cahill Senior Urban Designer
<b>In Attendance</b>	Arashdeep Singh, Manager Urban Design & Transport Jason Cahill, Senior Urban Designer Tim D'Agostino, Senior Urban Designer

**Attachments**

1. Final Thomastown- Lalor Place Framework Council Meeting [5.5.1.1 - 34 pages]
2. Phase 3 Engagement Summary Report Feb 2023 [5.5.1.2 - 14 pages]

**Purpose**

This report is being presented to Council for endorsement and provides:

- An overview of the Final Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment One).
- An overview of the community engagement process which occurred November 2022 (Attachment Two) where the community was able to provide feedback and prioritise opportunities.
- An overview of the 20-minute Neighbourhoods prioritisation tool Department of Transport and Planning partnership findings and recommendations that have been incorporated into the Place Framework.

**Brief Overview**

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework ('Framework') outlines a vision, themes, key focus areas and place shaping opportunities to locally translate Whittlesea 2040's goals to Thomastown and Lalor. This will guide and support future priority projects, activities, and drive change in Thomastown and Lalor.

The Framework has undergone a series of changes including three rounds of community consultation undertaken between 2021 and 2023.

A draft Framework was endorsed by Council on 17 October 2022 and was presented to the community. The draft Framework was exhibited and presented to the community for feedback over the month of November 2022. The engagement had strong community support and provided a platform for the community to prioritise themes and opportunities. The findings are found in the Community Engagement Report Summary 2023 (Attachment Two).

Between, May 2022 to February 2023, a '20-min Neighbourhood Prioritisation Tool' partnership with Department of Transport Planning (DPT) investigated various Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC's) across Thomastown and Lalor. Key findings from the report have been incorporated within the final Framework.

### Recommendation

#### **THAT Council:**

- 1. Endorse the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment 1).**
- 2. Write to contributors thanking them for their involvement and feedback throughout the reports' development.**
- 3. Note a copy of the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework will be provided to all local members of Parliament.**

### Key Information

Thomastown and Lalor are centrally located along High Street, a strategic corridor located between the Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre, key transport corridors and the future Suburban Rail Loop station proposed in Reservoir. The State Government has identified the suburbs for housing renewal and a level crossing removal is currently underway at Keon Park Station.

The key drivers for the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework are to:

- Translate the Whittlesea 2040 vision to Thomastown and Lalor by identifying local challenges and opportunities.
- Establish a local, place responsive vision that connects to community aspirations.
- Fill the gap in strategic direction for the established area and aging infrastructure and articulate a clear Council direction for place shaping priorities.
- Ensure Council planning and delivery considers the unique qualities of Thomastown and Lalor and enhances this over time.

#### Project History

1. Late 2020-July 2021 - a Challenges and Opportunities Report was prepared summarising background analysis and an initial phase of community engagement to inform the project. This report was released for community engagement from June to July 2021 and a Phase 2 Community Engagement Summary was released.

2. September 2021-April 2022 - An early draft of the Framework was released to internal stakeholders and State Government agencies in September 2021 and again to internal stakeholders in April 2022 for feedback.
3. July-October 2022 - The final draft of the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework was presented to ELT on 26 July 2022, and to Council Briefing on 26 September 2022. It was endorsed for community engagement at the Council meeting on 16 October 2022.
4. November 2022 – Present - the final Phase 3 community and stakeholder engagement occurred in November to December in 2022 and was summarised via the Phase 3 Community Engagement Summary Report (Attachment Two). In this, community were asked if they supported the project to date and which of the opportunities and themes that they would like Council to prioritise.
5. May 2022 – March 2023 – include findings from the 20-minute prioritisation tool partnership with DTP have been attributed to the themes to support future need of actions to implement change.
6. March 29, 2023 – the final Framework was presented to ELT, and it was unanimously supported to go to Council briefing with some minor improvements.

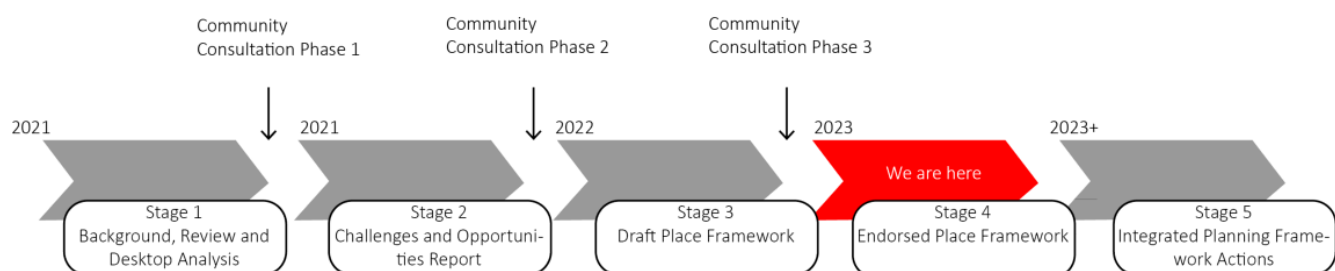


Figure 1: Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework Project Timeline

The Framework aligns to the Whittlesea 2040 Goals which are translated to Thomastown and Lalor through five key themes:

1. Sustainable Environment: Greener spaces
2. Liveable Neighbourhoods: Connected places
3. Connected Community: Shared local culture
4. Strong Local Economy: Vibrant centres and industries
5. Liveable Neighbourhoods: Enhanced Character



Each theme identifies key goals and opportunities that have been identified by analysis and stakeholder feedback. The Framework illustrates sites and locations that have clear opportunities for improvement. It provides place specific guidelines to improve Thomastown and Lalor and incrementally deliver the local vision over time.

The Framework incorporates a high-level implementation plan which identifies key partners, community priorities and broad timeframes for opportunities to be undertaken by Council. Discussions have started to be supported and discussed with other departments and units within Council and abroad.

### **Alignment to the Integrated Planning Framework and Place Based Approach**

The Framework is situated within Level Three of the Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) under Long Term Plans and aligns with the Place Based Approach at a Precinct level.

### **20 Minute Neighbourhood – Municipal Strategic Planning Project (2022-2023)**

The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about supporting places the community use every day and giving more people the freedom of choice to do more locally. Council recognises not all people have access to private transport. The intent is to ensure that all people have the option to safely walk, cycle or use public transport to the things they need on a daily basis (ie. shops, parks, services and schools).

The differing needs of people across their lifespan, due to gender, disability and their social roles, such as caring responsibilities will impact how the features of their neighbourhood might be prioritised. For many groups, such as women and girls, being safe whilst moving around a neighbourhood is a key consideration in their decision making and impacts the use of other amenities.

In May 2022, the City of Whittlesea successfully applied to partner with the Department of Planning and Transport (DPT) on the Municipal Strategic Planning Project (the Project). The Project is partnering with five metropolitan councils, to address identified barriers in implementing 20-minute neighbourhoods and to develop frameworks for Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC) definition, prioritisation, and strategic planning.

The City of Whittlesea's project scope was to pilot DTP's NAC tool in Thomastown and Lalor. This assisted Council to identify how centres are aligning to 20 Minute Neighbourhood outcomes and benchmarks and which centres should be prioritised for support across planning, infrastructure, and service delivery.

Key findings of this have been:

- Eight NACs should be focused on for improvements in Lalor and Thomastown.
- Existing population densities are mostly too low to support smaller NACs viability in Whittlesea.
- East-West and North-South connectivity is often poor and should be improved.
- Residential zonings tend to restrain commercial use and development and should be focused on higher density mixed use zonings in and around NACs. This also applies to greenfield areas.
- Public transport, particularly the bus network, and its relationship to the PPTN and NACs could be strengthened.
- Feedback on the Prioritisation Tool was provided to DTP, this highlighted the benefits of the tool and provided recommendations for improvements.

Key findings from the report have been incorporated within the final Framework.

### **Opportunities and community priorities**

There are five themes and seventeen key opportunities within the Framework for various Council departments, teams, and units to collaborate and deliver the final vision of the document. The community were asked to prioritise these themes and opportunities.

A detailed summary is presented below that demonstrate alignment with potential Council projects:

#### Greener Spaces (ranked first) – Naturalise Edgars Creek as a central green spine

- Improve connections between different land uses, improve biodiversity and create places for everyone within the Edgars Creek Corridor. Opportunity to develop a masterplan and seek possible funding to unlock opportunities.

#### Connected Places (ranked second) – High Street Spine Transformation (permeability and access)

- Apply findings from Movement and Place report, LATM's, level crossing removal project, and shared trail connections.

#### Shared Local Culture (ranked third) – May Street Precinct

- Considerations to increase annual events, improve service availability (health and social), support community programs, wholistic master/place planning, integrate art into space, place making activities etc.

Vibrant, Centres and Industries (ranked fourth) – Reimagined Business Places

- Improve business accessibility and vibrancy with evidence base investigations/ reports to support changes through various projects such as master planning or development guidelines.

Enhanced Character – Design Excellence, identify controls or guidelines to influence higher quality development

- Considerations for improved advice and guidance for all development near town centres, encourage relationships with developers to engage council, apply and enhance development controls. Neighbourhood Design Manual and Residential Interface Guidelines are evidence base projects are mechanisms for change.

Please note, although these are top priorities from the community, final outcomes may vary due to other outcomes, such as existing projects, availability for funding, investigations required, budgets, etc.

### Community Consultation and Engagement

The draft Framework was exhibited and presented to the community for feedback over the month of November 2022. There was high participation across various stakeholders which includes State and Local agencies, individual community members, and a diverse mix of targeted stakeholder groups. Findings of the engagement is detailed in the Community Engagement Summary Report (Attachment Two).

Community Engagement Summary:

1. Overwhelming support of the draft Framework with over 365 Contributions (144 in person) and 439 online webpage visitors.
2. Naturalised Edgars Creek as a green spine was identified most as important opportunity to the community.
3. In order, community priorities are Greener Spaces (1<sup>st</sup>), Connected (2<sup>nd</sup>), Shared Local Culture (3<sup>rd</sup>), Vibrant Centre's and Industries (4<sup>th</sup>) and Enhanced Character (5<sup>th</sup>).

The engagement was undertaken by:

- Engage Whittlesea page including surveys and interactive elements.
- Interactive Place Based Workshop
- Online Information Session – Evening Session
- Pop up at Lalor Shops and Thomastown TRAC / Library
- Let's Talk Pop Up
- Direct mail
- Community pop-ups
- Promisetown Event

- Presentations to various stakeholder groups including, Youth Advisory Committee, Business Advisory Panel, Thomastown Precinct Activation Group, Friends of Westgarthtown and more.

### Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### **Liveable Neighbourhoods**

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

The plan strongly aligns with this theme.

#### **High performing organisation**

We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and best deliver value.

#### **Strong Local Economy**

Our municipality attracts investment to provide more local jobs to match population growth.

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework aligns with all five of the Whittlesea 2040 goals. The project is listed as a Community Plan 2021-2025 Initiative within the High Performing Organisation goal - #53 Establish a place-based approach to Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities.

The Framework has strong alignment to the Integrated Planning Framework and Place Based Approach as discussed earlier in this report. It also considers the Outcomes and Indicators Framework.

#### **State and Local Strategic Context**

The Framework is being prepared within the context established by State Planning Policy including *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*, *Melbourne's Growth Corridor Plans*, draft *Northern Land Use Framework Plan* and the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme*. In addition to these documents, four Council strategies (listed below), have specific and related actions for Thomastown and Lalor that are proposed to be implemented and were considered in the Framework development:

- The *Open Space Strategy* (2016) identified gaps in open space provision across Thomastown and Lalor which will be considered by the Framework in addition to other Strategy actions relevant to the area.

- The *Whittlesea Water for all – our water strategy* (2020-2030) includes actions to improve sections of waterway within Thomastown and Lalor.
- The *Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy* includes an action to ‘include increased greening (with emphasis on tree retention and planting) in all Urban Design Frameworks.
- The *Housing Diversity Strategy* 2013-2033 identifies areas in Thomastown and Lalor for housing change. The Place Framework will highlight opportunities to be considered when the Strategy is next reviewed.

The Place Framework has also considered the place-based approach in development and the following strategic documents:

- *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*
- *Community Plan 2021-2025*
- *Strong Local Economy Strategy and Action Plan*
- *Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan*
- *Climate Change Plan*
- *Integrated Transport Strategy 2014*
- *Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2022*
- *City of Whittlesea Bicycle Plan 2016-2020*

## Considerations

### Environmental

The Framework highlights priorities for Thomastown and Lalor to incorporate increased tree canopy cover, consider climate change impacts and re-establish biodiversity.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to improve social, cultural and health outcomes in Thomastown and Lalor.

### Economic

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to improve economic outcomes in Thomastown and Lalor.

### Financial Implications

The Framework identifies ‘place shaping opportunities’ to deliver the vision for the area. The opportunities are intended to inform IPF Strategy Action Plans and budget processes which may have financial implications for Council in the future.

Some opportunities are the responsibility of other agencies to deliver or require more considered investigation from Council to implement.

### Link to Strategic Risk

**Strategic Risk Service Delivery** - *Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing*

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to prioritise infrastructure projects that will have a positive impact on community wellbeing. The Framework will also better inform a wide variety of service and infrastructure planning to consider the local place qualities of Thomastown and Lalor.

**Strategic Risk Life Cycle Asset Management** - *Failure to effectively plan for the construction, on-going maintenance and renewal of Council's assets*

The Framework provides a coordinated approach to asset management by providing an overarching strategic direction and vision for the area. The Framework identifies key assets that should be prioritised for renewal or delivery to maximise community use such as access to path networks, open spaces and community facilities.

**Strategic Risk Community and Stakeholder Engagement** - *Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

The Framework provides the community an opportunity to help shape the vision and priorities for their local area. Through this the community will have an improved understanding of Council's strategic direction and how it applies to Thomastown and Lalor.

### Implementation Strategy

#### Communication

Once the Framework has been endorsed by Council, the document will be released publicly, and community and stakeholders involved will be informed of its release. The Framework will help guide Council's future actions, budgets and priorities.

#### Critical Dates

The Framework is a Community Plan Initiative and must be finalised and endorsed by Council by end of June 2023.

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.



## Conclusion

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment One) has undergone extensive development with community, key stakeholders and is well supported. The Framework creates a place responsive vision, identifies themes, outcomes and place shaping recommendations to locally translate Whittlesea 2040's vision of 'a place for all'.



# DRAFT THOMASTOWN AND LALOR Place Framework 2023





CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS	INTRODUCTION	3
	STUDY AREA	6
	TIME LINE	7
	COMMUNITIES PROFILE	8
	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	9
	COMMUNITY DRIVERS FOR CHANGE	10
THEMES, KEY AREAS, PLACE SHAPING OPPORTUNITIES	VISION STATEMENT	11
	GREENER SPACES	12-15
	CONNECTED PLACES	16-19
	SHARED LOCAL CULTURE	20-23
	VIBRANT CENTRES AND INDUSTRIES	24-27
APPLICATION	ENHANCED CHARACTER	28-31
	PLACE SHAPING OVER TIME AND SUMMARY PLAN	32-33

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS**

City Of Whittlesea recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the municipality.

*‘The waterway that is now called Edgars Creek is 16 kilometres long, it begins as puddles in Wollert grasslands, flows through Epping, Thomastown and Lalor, and joins Merri Creek in North Coburg. Merri Creek flows into the Yarra River, and then into Port Phillip Bay.*

*Edgars creek flows through the Country of the Wurundjeri Willum clan of the Woi Wurrung language group, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people, who are part of the East Kulin nation.*

*According to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung tradition, Bunjil the wedge-tailed eagle formed the land of the Woi Wurrung people, and is the creation ancestor of men. Pallian the bat formed the oceans, rivers and creeks, and is the creation ancestor of women.’*

*Source (Turning Back To Edgars Creek. A Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Waterway)*



## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE OF THE PLACE FRAMEWORK

The Place Framework illustrates a shared community and Council vision to guide the future of Thomastown and Lalor. The framework aims to identify community priority opportunities that can shape local places and form connections to deliver a network of improvements over time.

The project is an ongoing collaborative approach to improve streets, public spaces, community precincts, infrastructure, built form and transport.

The implementation of the framework will be subject to further detailed design, funding availability, consultation with stakeholders and the community.

The Place Framework is designed to support and deliver concepts and strategic directions from the following:

- Whittlesea 2040
- Place Based Approach
- Plan Melbourne + 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
- Placemaking
- + Other relevant policies as noted throughout document

### COUNCIL'S VARIOUS DOCUMENTATION

The Place Framework attributes itself to the many council documents to guide decisions within the City Of Whittlesea. These range from policies, development plans, actions and master plans etc.

The Place Framework has reiterated, supported or add valued to those documents where it seems fit for purpose. However, the final outcome of those documents may vary from the Place Framework as each project evolves organically over time.

### WHITTLESEA 2040

The Place Framework translates *Whittlesea's 2040 Vision: A Place for All* to Thomastown and Lalor and the needs and aspirations of the community. It considers the key five goals – Connected community, Liveable neighbourhoods, Strong local economy, Sustainable environment and High performing organisation to deliver local outcomes.

Over time the framework will assist to develop local actions to deliver the seven strategies outlined in Council's Integrated Planning Framework.

### EQUITY AT THE HEART OF 2040

Equity and inclusion sit at the heart of our 2040 vision of a place for all. Actions arising from this framework will consider the experiences and needs of Aboriginal people, people within the LGBTIQ community and those of different genders, socio-economic, abilities, ages, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

The City of Whittlesea is legislated to consider the differing needs of people of all genders and promote gender equality in the way we design and manage spaces in the municipality and legislated responsibility to remove barriers for people with disability in order that all community members can participate in public life.



#### EQUAL TREATMENT

Treating everyone the same  
Equal amount of resources



#### EQUITY

Taking an equity approach  
Different provision of resources dependent on need



#### TRUE EQUALITY

Achieving equity - removing all the barrier to participation so everyone can equally participate

*Difference between Equality, Equity and True Equality.*



*W2040 Goals and future strategies. (Source Whittlesea Council)*



## Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

## PLACE BASED APPROACH

The City of Whittlesea is establishing a place-based approach to planning, service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local neighbourhoods. The development of a place-based approach will embed more localised and collaborative approaches to service delivery, place insights, activation and planning.

The place based approach takes a holistic approach in delivering on the five goals of W2040 and is based on the City of Whittlesea's Internal Geographic Framework boundaries.

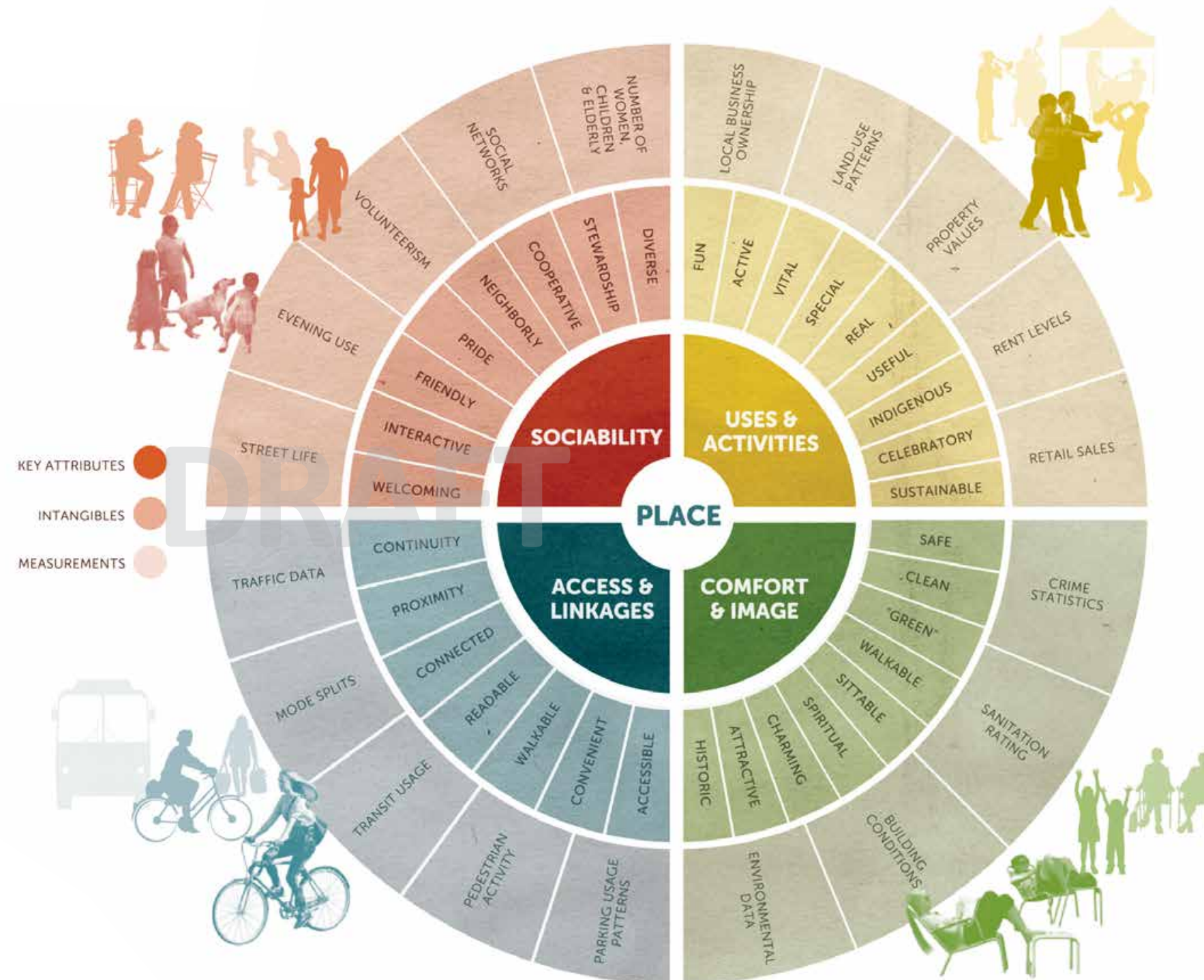
Thomastown and Lalor form part of the South West District which extends north to Epping.

## PLACEMAKING

Placemaking inspires people to collectively re-imagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

Placemaking is a key opportunity for Council and community members to work together to test ideas, deliver improvements and drive changes within Thomastown and Lalor.

Website reference: Project for Public Spaces. What is Place Making? (2007)



The Place Diagram (Project from Public Spaces)

## 20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Plan Melbourne is a metropolitan strategy that guides the growth of metro Melbourne for the next 35 years. One of the principles is Living Locally - 20-minute neighbourhoods.

The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about supporting places the community use every day and giving more people the freedom of choice to do more locally. Council recognises not all people have access to private transport. The intent is to ensure that all people have the option to safely walk, cycle or use public transport to the things they need on a daily basis (i.e. shops, parks, services and schools).

The differing needs of people across their lifespan, due to gender, disability and their social roles, such as caring responsibilities will impact how the features of their neighbourhood might be prioritised. For many groups, such as women and girls, being safe whilst moving around a neighbourhood is a key consideration in their decision making and impacts the use of other amenities.



20 minute Neighbourhoods Hallmarks (Sourced from Plan Melbourne)

## 20-minute neighbourhoods program

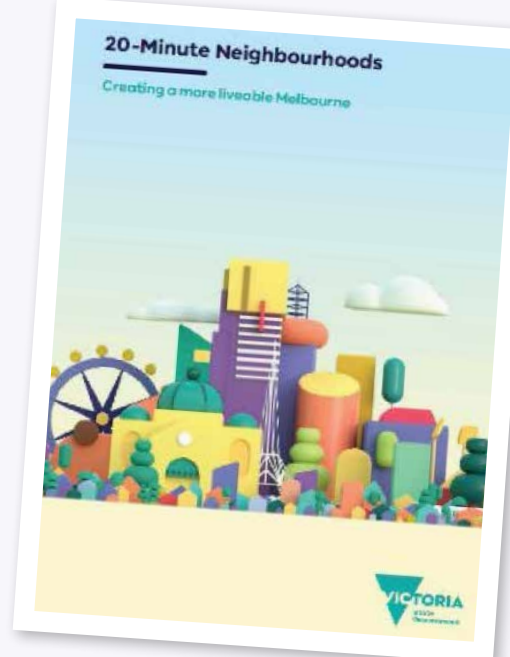
### MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECT (MSPP)

#### 20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PILOT PROGRAM INVESTIGATION (JUNE 2022 - FEBRUARY 2023)

City of Whittlesea partnered with Department of Environment Land Water and Planning to review and document various **Neighbourhood Activity Centre's (NAC's)** in Thomastown and Lalor.

NAC's, also known as town centres, are places in where people come to shop, work, meet, relax and live. NAC's are defined as Small, Medium and Large sizes, where depending on their scale, perform various functions, services, and provide particular roles to their community.

The project reviewed, assessed and identified gaps of NAC's performances and then provided a series of recommendations and priorities to Council to help deliver accessible, inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods.



20 minute Prioritisation tool findings.

Key findings have been incorporated in this final document and provide third party advice. Findings may not be adopted due to various factors such as required studies, feasibility, priorities, Council budgets and time frames.

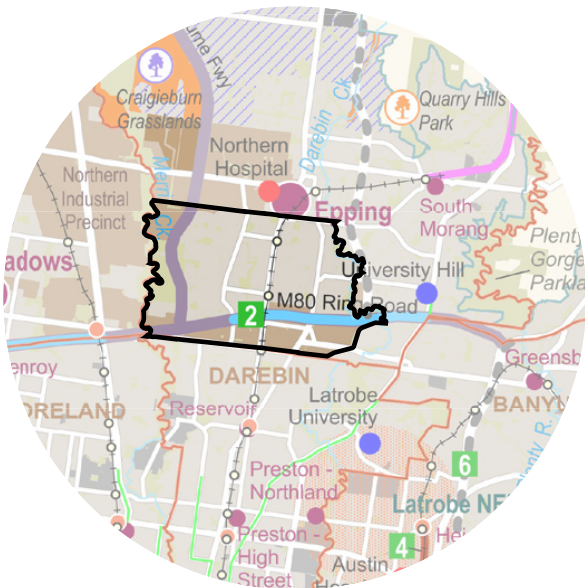
The reports summary recommends the following:

1. Supporting continued commercial activities and mixed use developments
2. Sponsoring/ supporting retailing and community festivals and other place-based activities.
3. Sponsoring/ supporting retailing and community festivals and other place based activities including pedestrian only areas in place of 10-20 car spaces as congregation points.
4. Improving the pedestrian and cycling environment and connectivity.
5. Advocating for the grade separation of the railway line
6. Advocating for a new Lalor railway station adjacent to the commercial area.
7. Advocating for improved bus services and frequency to the Lalor and Thomastown NACs
8. Advocating for improved bus services and frequency to other NACs
9. Replacing residential land with zones such as the MUZ and RGZ that support the commercial area.
10. Supporting the specialisation of some centres.
11. Undertaking capital works investments in the public realm which reduce the dominance of vehicles and car parking, improve the pedestrian experience and increase vegetation cover.



Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

STUDY AREA



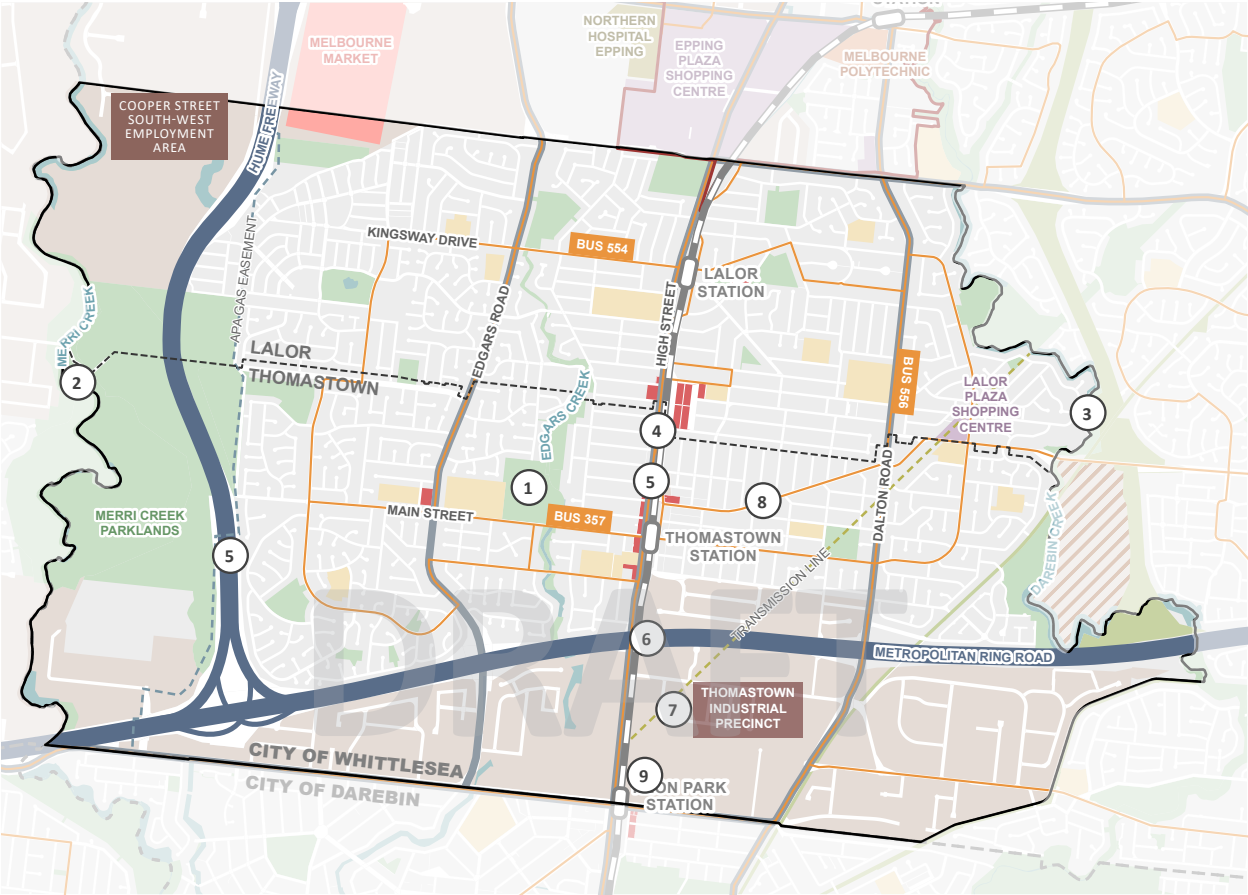
Northern Land Use Framework Plan.  
(Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning)

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Thomastown and Lalor are centrally located in the northern Melbourne metropolitan region and form a southern gateway to the City of Whittlesea along High Street. The area contains some of the oldest housing in the municipality and also the State Significant Thomastown Industrial Area.

The area provides convenient access to the Hume and Metropolitan Ring Road freeways, Mernda Rail line and is located in close proximity to the Epping Central Metropolitan Activity Centre and LaTrobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster. The future Suburban Rail Loop will connect to the Mernda line at Reservoir, two stops south of Keon Park. The suburbs are bordered to the west and east by the Merri and Darebin Creeks, with the Edgars Creek forming a central green spine.

Transmission easements and gas easements cut across Thomastown and Lalor. Each service industry have their own specific guidelines and requirements that need to be considered for any future development along their easement corridors.



Local Context Plan

THOMASTOWN AND LALOR INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS AREAS

Industrial areas identified in the study area have existing guidance for use and vision. This document intends to expand on the opportunities found in the Thomastown Industrial Area Plan to attract investment and encourage local employment.

Reference: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/media/3353/final-tia-plan-march-2018.Pdf>

LEGEND

	Study Area		Industrial
	Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre		Train Station And Rail Line
	Neighbourhood Activity Centre		Bus Route
	Shopping Centre		Freeways
	Melbourne Market		Main Road
	Schools		APA Gas Easement
	Public Open Space		Transmission Easement

KEY FEATURES

- Edgars Creek**
  - The Board of Works concreted sections of Edgars Creek in Thomastown in the 1980's. At the time this was considered the best way to stop flooding and protect the banks of the creek.
- Merri Creek borders Hume City Council**
- Darebin Creek supports the Darebin Creek Trail**
- High Street as a key north-south commercial corridor (transitioning away from being a Principal Freight Transport Route)**
- Mernda Rail line (three stations – Keon Park, Thomastown and Lalor)**
  - In future Lalor may be the start of a new rail line spur extending to Wollert.
  - The existing rail corridor impacts east west connectivity.
- Hume Freeway and the Metropolitan Ring Road**
  - Provides for mass movement of people and goods
  - The Hume Freeway restricts connections to Merri Creek and associated regional parklands.
  - The Metropolitan Ring Road assists in creating an effective buffer to much of the industrial area, however limits North-South connections.
- Thomastown forming part of the Northern State Significant Industrial Precinct as a key economic and employment driver**
- The area between Edgars Road and Dalton Road has been identified by the Victorian State Government for future housing growth and renewal**
- The Terminal Station in Thomastown (and associated transmission line) presents a poor quality gateway.**

## TIME LINE

### A PROUD INDIGENOUS CULTURE

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung have lived in the area for millennia, living near creeks and rivers, hunting fish, eels, and shellfish, as well as birds and animals, and harvesting plants. The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung managed their Country according to their six seasons, and met with neighbouring clans for trade and ceremonies.

About 60,000 years before colonisation, Wurundjeri people, families and communities managed the land that the City of Whittlesea now occupies. Throughout this time the Plenty River and other local natural features provided an abundance of flora and fauna as both a source of food and shelter.

The pre-colonial legacy of the Wurundjeri people can still be seen today as the Whittlesea area is home to a number of protected and sacred 'scarred' trees. These trees were used for making bark canoes or as boundary markers for distinct tribal groups. Today the scarred river-red gum trees serve as a reminder that Aboriginal people have always been, and will always be, central to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of the City of Whittlesea.

### EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

European settlement in the area began in the late 1840s and 1850s. British, German and Wendish farming families settled along Edgars Creek, in the parish of Keelbundora, which was named after a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung boy.

Thomastown is thought to have been named after the Thomas family who began market gardening in the area in the 1840s. The name Thomastown has been in official use since the early 1850s. The number of residents was small until the late 1800s, spurred by the opening of the railway to Whittlesea in 1889.

Intact buildings of Westgarthtown, including a Lutheran Church and cemetery, are evidence of German/Wendish settlement which commenced in 1850.

Early industrial development in Thomastown included the establishment of a pottery in Settlement Road in 1922.

The electrification of the railway line to Thomastown in 1929 prompted the subdivision of land around the railway station for residential development.

### POST-WORLD WAR 2

Lalor was a part of Thomastown until 1945 when Leo Purcell, a patient at a military hospital on the Atherton Tablelands, devised a scheme to provide low cost homes for ex-servicemen. In February 1947 he formed the Peter Lalor Home Building Co-operative Society with a group of ex-servicemen and a program of house building began. This continued until 1954 when it was taken over by the War Service Homes Commission. Heritage listing of parts of the Peter Lalor Estate commemorate this important social history.

The first house on the estate was 400 Station Street constructed in 1948 and still stands to this day. The Lalor post office opened in 1949 followed by the first primary school in 1954.

Significant development occurred in Thomastown and Lalor in the post-war years, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s. Large numbers of migrants from Greece, Italy, Malta and Macedonia moved into the area at this time.

### SUBURBAN EXPANSION

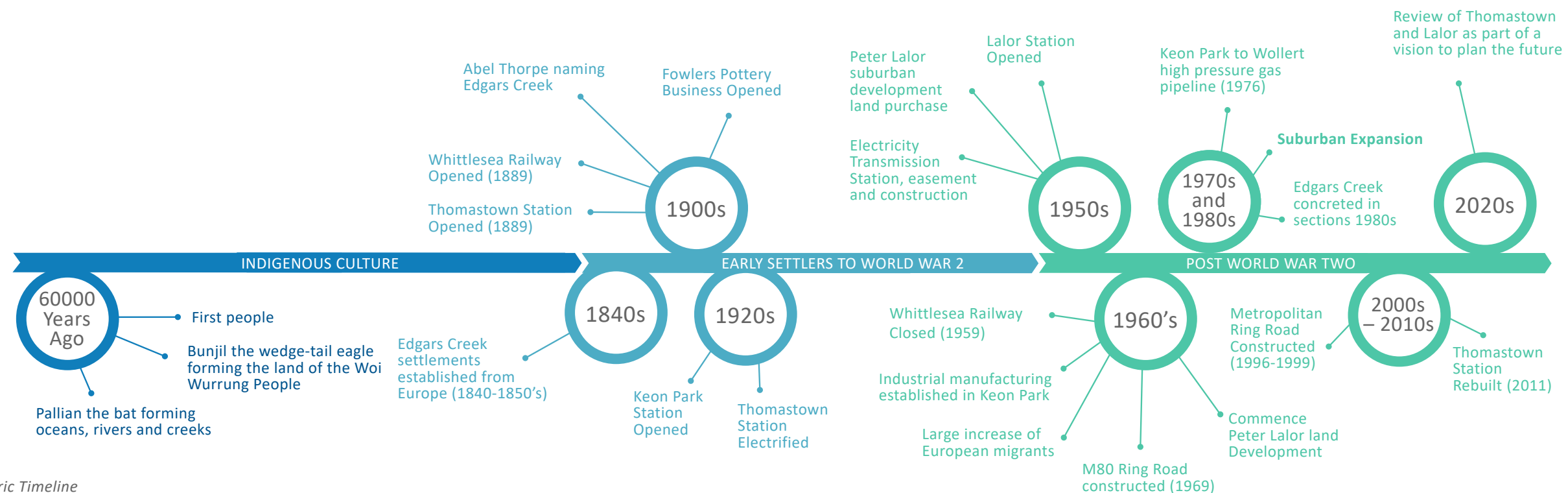
The post-war development boom created demand for more jobs, particularly local jobs. The area of Thomastown bound by Heyington Avenue to the north, Dalton Road to the east, Keon Parade to the south and High Street to the west, was zoned for industrial uses. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s a range of manufacturing industries set up in this area.

The subdivision of farms along Edgars Creek commenced in the 1960s. Houses were built with their backs to the creek, though children continued to play down by the creek.

Suburban housing development rapidly expanded into the 1970s and 1980s.

The Metropolitan Ring Road was constructed in the 1990s. The Hume Freeway opened in 2004, providing a direct connection from the Ring Road to northern regional areas.

In 2020s State Government identified land along High Street for housing renewal and growth.




Historic Timeline


Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

THOMASTOWN AND LALOR


*is growing and aging*



**48,300**  
Residents in 2022




**+ 10,260**  
more residents by 2041




**30% of population are 60+ years of age**  
**30% of population are less than 25 years of age**


*needs more open space and trees*



**23 square meters**  
provision of usable open space per resident (2016)




**17 square meters**  
projected provision of usable open space per resident (2041).  
Recommended minimum open space provision is 20-25sqm per resident




**less than 7%**  
tree canopy cover  
vs target 27% by 2050  
(Living Melbourne)


*is diverse and multi-cultural*




**47.9%**  
were born overseas



**65%**  
speak a language other than English at home




need help day to day due to disability




**15%**  
residents are not fluent in English

*will be impacted by climate change*




**5-10° C**  
hotter above the non-urban baseline

*perception is*




**9%**  
households feel unsafe during the day




**32%**  
households feel unsafe during at night

(City of Whittlesea Household Survey 2021)


*has changing housing needs*




**34%**  
of households are couples with children




**23%**  
of households are couples without children




**22%**  
are lone persons



**13%**  
are single parents with children




**11+%**  
live in medium density housing




**+ 4,693**  
more dwellings needed by 2041


*economy and employment*




**\$1.6B**  
Contribution to the economy from Thomastown Industrial Precinct




**17,000**  
jobs in Thomastown Industrial Precinct



**\$1,065**  
the lowest median weekly income in Whittlesea




**48.6%**  
the lowest labour participation in Whittlesea




**7%**  
youth (15-24 years old) unemployment rate and disengaged

*requires assistance*



**#1**  
the most disadvantaged suburbs in Whittlesea




**25%**  
residents do not have home internet

**10%**  
in need of assistance due to disability.

**7%**  
households with a mental health condition

*moves by different modes*



**66.1%**  
respondents use walking and cycling paths on a weekly basis  
(City of Whittlesea Household Survey 2021)

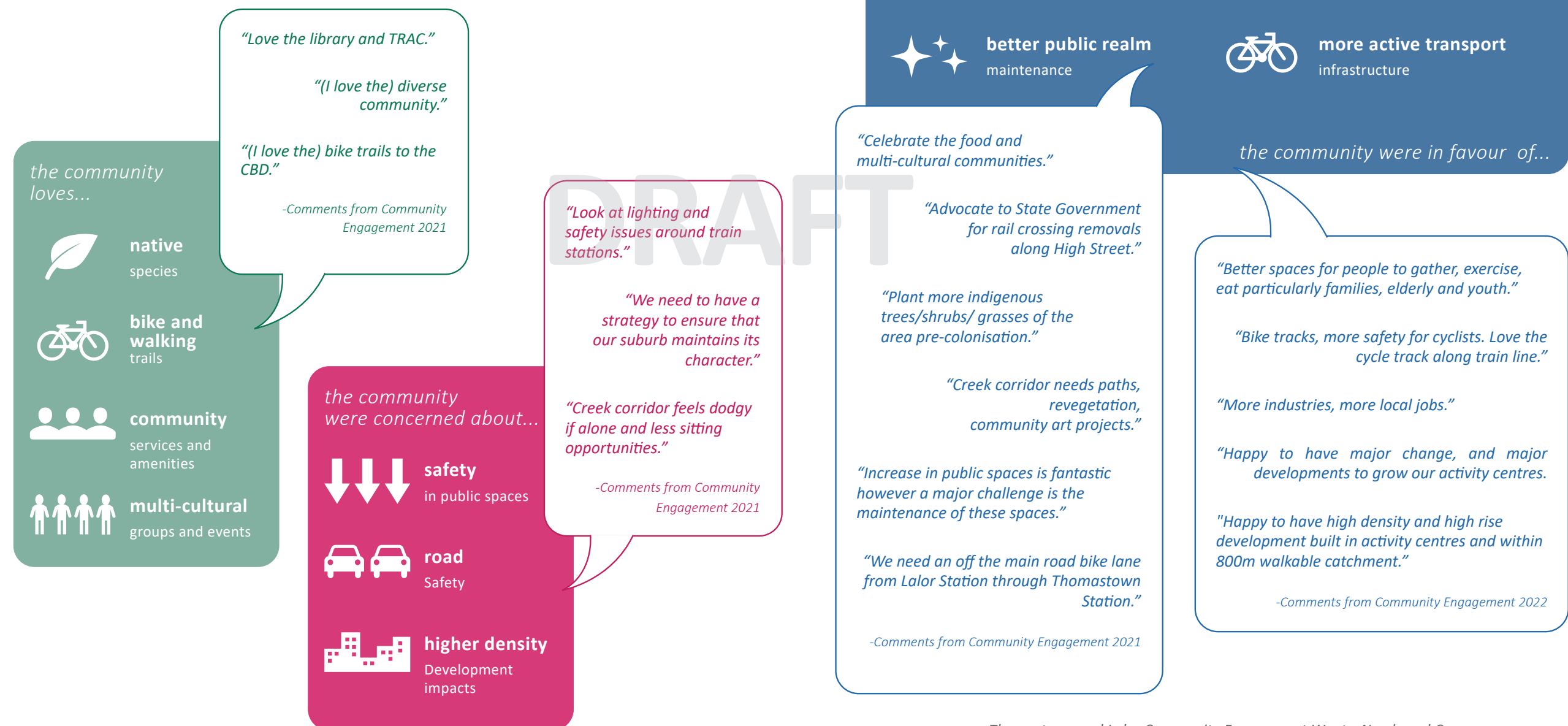
Data (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021 (unless stated otherwise)

## THE COMMUNITY WERE IN FAVOUR FOR

The Place Vision has been informed by community feedback on challenges and opportunities. From April to August 2021, Council gathered feedback from an online survey and social map, met with community groups, and attended Walking Thomastown 2021. For more information, see the Community Engagement Summary Report (September 2021).

Council requested feedback from the community in November 2022 to prioritise the opportunities identified in the document. The findings from the document are incorporated throughout the report. For more information, see the Community Engagement Summary Report (January 2022).

Below is a summary of the findings from both engagement sessions.





**COMMUNITY DRIVERS FOR CHANGE**

The Whittlesea 2040 Goals have been translated to Thomastown and Lalor in response to place analysis and community consultation. The key community drivers for each theme are ranked highest to lowest priority as per the 2022 final community consultation.

Connected Places and Shared Local Culture were ranked closely.

#1

Sustainable environment

**GREENER SPACES**

**THE COMMUNITY NEEDS:**

- More usable open space and informal green spaces
- Increased tree canopy cover and native vegetation
- Better connections to creeks and parks

**KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

- Accessible and easy to find parks
- Responsive public spaces
- Cooler, greener and bio-diverse

#2

Liveable neighbourhoods

**CONNECTED PLACES**

**THE COMMUNITY NEEDS:**

- Better access to key destinations
- Easier connections across the suburbs
- Pleasant street environments for walking and cycling

**KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

- High Street as a place
- Enhanced connections
- Regional trails

#3

Connected community

**SHARED LOCAL CULTURE**

**THE COMMUNITY NEEDS:**

- Places to gather
- Places to celebrate local heritage and culture
- Hubs with distinct identity

**KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

- Welcoming precincts
- Culturally celebrated civic spaces
- Informal spaces

#4

Strong local economy

**VIBRANT CENTRES AND INDUSTRIES**

**THE COMMUNITY NEEDS:**

- Safe and inviting NACs
- Attractive employment areas
- Opportunities for local employment

**KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

- Vibrant, viable and attractive NACs
- Active retail spine and movement corridor
- Inclusive and dynamic local economy

#5

Liveable neighbourhoods

**ENHANCED CHARACTER**

**THE COMMUNITY NEEDS:**

- Improved development quality
- Protect local character
- Safer public spaces

**KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

- Public space interface
- Urban renewal
- Quality and character





*"Thomastown and Lalor will be a safe, connected and thriving place where its rich history will seamlessly blend with future developments. It will be vibrant, welcoming and inclusive, with green spaces and places for people of all ages to come together.*

*Its local industries and NACs will provide local employment and support the community to thrive."*

*Vision Statement*





*"Create places to linger so the residents can stay active and feel comfortable."*

*"We need more quality green spaces for health and well-being."*

*"I want better access to creeks and parks."*

*Naturalizing Edgar's creek was voted as the number one priority by the community.*



**20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS**

**COUNCIL GOALS**  
Sustainable environment

Access and Transport, Housing, Environment and Recreation, Education and Housing, Community, Employment

**KEY 20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD HALLMARKS / W2040 COUNCIL GOAL**

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:**  
Sustainable Environment Strategy, 2022  
Open Space Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne, 2021  
Living Melbourne: our metropolitan urban forest, 2019  
Northern Regional Trails Strategy, 2022  
Melbourne Water – Water Sensitive Urban Design

GREENER SPACES

Thomastown and Lalor will be greener, more resilient and support everyone in the community to connect and relax in a high quality natural environment.

GOALS



ACCESSIBLE AND EASY TO FIND PARKS



RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SPACES



COOLER, GREENER AND BIO-DIVERSE

OPPORTUNITIES

Highest Priority  
2022 Community  
Consultation



**NATURALISE EDGARS CREEK AS A CENTRAL GREEN SPINE**  
Edgars Creek open space to act as a centralised spine that provides biodiversity and passive and active uses for the community.



**FILL OPEN SPACE GAPS AND/OR TO MAINTAIN AMENITY AND LIVEABILITY**  
Open space to be enjoyed equally by all members of the community with high functioning facilities that can be adapted for use during different times of the day and year.



**GROW AND RE-WILD OPEN SPACE TO IMPROVE TREE CANOPY COVER AND BIODIVERSITY**  
A cooler and greener Thomastown and Lalor.



**MITIGATE FLOODING AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
Thomastown and Lalor to be climate change resilient with innovative design solutions.

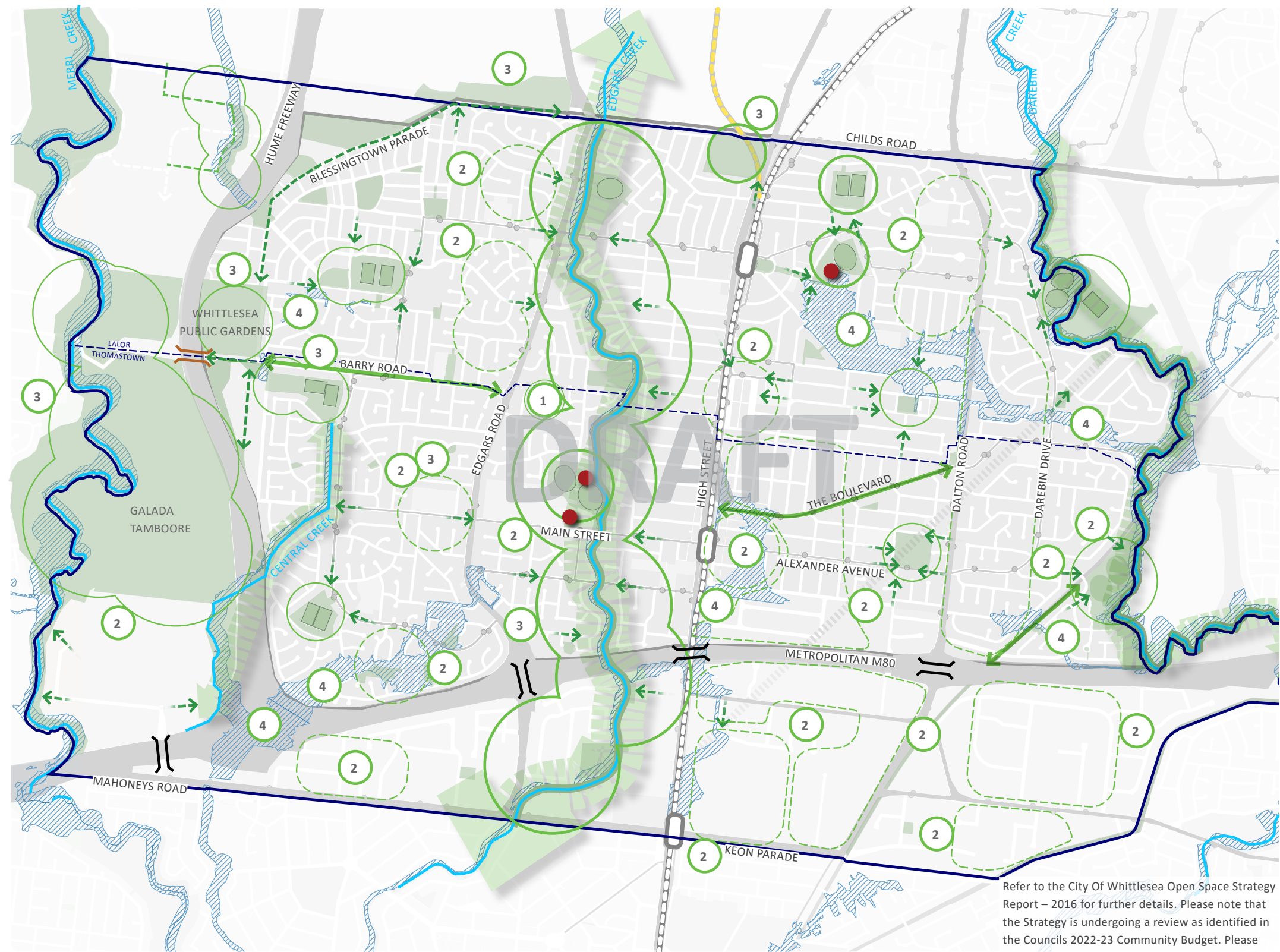


Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

- LEGEND

  - Thomastown and Lalor boundary
  - State Roads
  - Existing bus routes and stops
  - Creek line
  - Rail + transit hub
  - Wollert Rail extension
  - Bridge
  - Pedestrian Bridge
  - Existing Aboriginal spaces (Bubup Willum + Lalor Tennis Club)
  - Open space
- OPPORTUNITIES

  - Mitigate flooding issues
  - Linear street planting
  - Edgars Creek corridor upgrade
  - Improve key connections through greening projects
  - Key parks/open space
  - Open space gaps
  - Opportunities location



Greener Spaces Plan



## Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

## GOALS

## ACCESSIBLE AND EASY TO FIND PARKS

A series of connected spaces that support active, passive, contemporary and innovative uses that goes beyond the traditional function of movement.

## Safe And Comfortable Path Networks

- Improve the experience and draw people into open space for pedestrian and cycling users. E.g. coloured pavement, large colourful tree selection, infrastructure entry statements.
  - Improve safety by avoiding blank walls and hidden spots along key pedestrian and cycling routes.
  - Enhance key cycling and pedestrian routes experience with increased tree planting, tree species selection to reduce heat island effect and respond to the climate (e.g. Deciduous trees to allow sun for winter and shade for summer).
- Key trails that should increase planting:
- Edgars Creek, Merri Creek and Central Creek

## Edgars Creek

- Improve and foster relationships with various stakeholders, adjacent landowners and authorities that back onto Edgars Creek to unlock design outcomes and explore co-funded open space opportunities.
- Fill in the gap by connecting and constructing a singular north-south shared path along the various drainage corridors. E.g. Edgars Creek, Central Creek and Darebin Creek.
- Improve ease of movement by prioritising pedestrian crossings along Creek corridors. The primary pedestrian crossing along Edgars Creek are:
  - Kingsway Drive, Roberts Street, German Lane, Main Street, Spring Street and M80.
- A smart corridor that educates the public of water literacy, cultural history and biodiversity.

## Barry Road

- Barry Road Hume Freeway crossing to support a well vegetated cycling and pedestrian east-west connection from Merri Creek to Edgars Creek.

## Heritage Sites

- Improve community connection to the history of Thomastown and Lalor with appropriate signage, path connections, infrastructure focussing around heritage and cultural sites. E.g. Westgarthtown, Main Street Recreation Reserve, May Street, Zeibells Farm house etc

## RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SPACES

Open space to be responsive to and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage, local character and support community values and use.

## General

- Increase open space pockets along creek corridors.
- Maintain Thomastown and Lalor open space per person average to 20-25m<sup>2</sup> per resident. Open spaces should be:
  - Within 400-800m walkable catchment from every home and must vary in scale, activity and uses.
  - Civic spaces such as squares, plaza or green spaces should be in each neighbourhood.

## Culturally Responsive

- Enhance Thomastown and Lalor by celebrating and working with the traditional landowners of the Woi Wurrang to guide open space master planning, land use planning and landscape embellishment.
- Enhance the rich history of Thomastown and Lalor by telling the story of the area with locally responsive materials, elements, colours and visual connections along Edgars Creek key heritage sites.
- Continue to improve open spaces and infrastructure such as playgrounds, community gardens and recreation facilities to support people of all ages, genders and abilities.
- Improve open space management and maintenance for open space infrastructure to retain quality and use.
- Improve open space facilities and programming throughout the week, during the day and night.
- Improve safety and comfort for all users within open space for all times of the day, targeting existing and future spaces. Design improvements should include clear sight lines, appropriate lighting and avoid blind spots.



Example of public art installation in open space. (Great Eastern Way, South Morang)

## COOLER, GREENER AND BIO-DIVERSE

Address needs of the community by identifying opportunities that mitigate climate change issues.

## Climate Change Mitigation

- Increase the abundance of tree canopies in streets and public realm to achieve the 'Living Melbourne' 27% tree canopy coverage for Thomastown and Lalor.
- Increase water catchment measures for buildings and within the built environment to mitigate flooding.
- Improve storm water run off opportunities to provide water supply for landscaping such as, rain gardens and large canopy trees.

## Edgars Creek

- Enhance Edgars Creek biodiversity by re-vegetating and re-naturalising the channel to attract flora and fauna species. Opportunity to leverage off various stakeholders (community groups, council, authorities and government) to fund, design and construct Edgars Creek under one vision.
- Enhance Thomastown and Lalor as an integrated 'Sponge City' with Edgars Creek established as a sustainable and environmentally conscious corridor maximising planting opportunities leverage's off water availability.
- Improve the interface with the Thomastown and Lalor Employment and Industrial areas that supports safer active travel and safer open space opportunities – both for workers, and those moving through the area.

## Westgarthtown

- Enhance quality place by ensuring restoration and embellishment of existing and future open space including rockwalls, historic qualities and biodiversity.
- Community infrastructure to be well constructed robust and have longevity.

## Open Space Provision

- Monitor open space provision against population growth to ensure minimum 20-25sqm provision.

## Findings from '20-minute neighbourhood' Program

- In the public realm improve the pedestrian and cycling experience and increase vegetation cover. E.g. The Boulevard, Juith Court, Lorne Street and Edgars Road were identified as key opportunities.
- Targeting investment dollars, including for capital works, place based improvements and community strengthening activities to particular NACs.

## OPPORTUNITIES

## SHAPE THOMASTOWN AND LALOR BY:



## NATURALISE EDGARS CREEK AS A CENTRAL GREEN SPINE

Highest Priority 2022 Community Consultation

- 1.1 Develop an Edgars Creek Masterplan within all Thomastown and Lalor.
- 1.2 Advocate for funding from Federal, State and Local sources to foster upgrades and improvements.



## FILL OPEN SPACE GAPS AND/OR TO MAINTAIN AMENITY AND LIVEABILITY

- 2.1 Review and update CoW Open Space Strategy to improve open space provision for Thomastown and Lalor.
- 2.2 Investigate mechanisms to secure open space in identified gap areas.
- 2.3 Ensure Open Space have a masterplan strategy to review each park.



## GROW AND REWILD OPEN SPACE TO IMPROVE TREE CANOPY COVER AND BIODIVERSITY

- 3.1 Advocate for funding to support biodiversity and environmental initiatives for businesses and residents.
- 3.2 Partnerships with community groups to provide planting opportunities. E.g. Merri Creek and Friends, Friends of Edwards Lake etc.



## MITIGATE FLOODING AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 4.1 Council to actively encourage innovative businesses and residential development to include Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) solutions into planning, construction, management and operations.
- 4.2 Advocate for integrated water management projects to utilise storm water runoff from the built environment to improve water availability.

1

NATURALISE EDGARS CREEK AS A CENTRAL GREEN SPINE

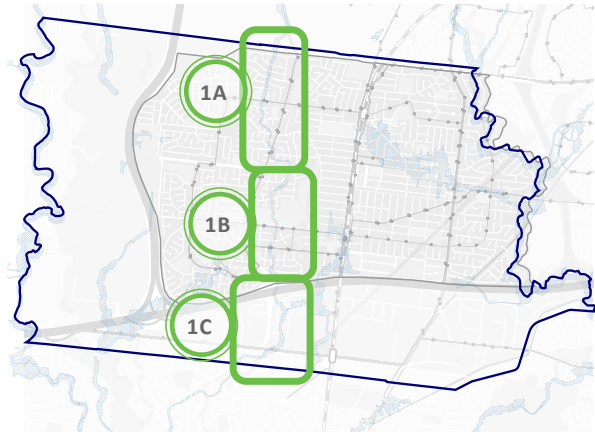
1A WESTGARTHTOWN TO HUSKISSON RESERVE

1B WESTGARTHTOWN TO M80



Open space (Edgars Creek + Main Street Recreation Reserve) are real assets for the community

KEY PLAN



1C M80 TO MAHONEYS ROAD



Edgars Creek High Level Opportunity and Constraints Plans (1A, 1B, 1C)





## CONNECTED PLACES

Streets in Thomastown and Lalor will balance movement with place to ensure the community can access services, have transport options and move about the area in a high quality and safe environment.

### GOALS



HIGH STREET AS A PLACE



REGIONAL TRAILS



ENHANCED CONNECTIONS

### OPPORTUNITIES

5

#### EAST WEST CONNECTIONS

Connect and prioritise the disjointed key pedestrian and cycling routes that have been asked for by the community.

5A

Kingsway Drive to Curtin Ave

5B

Barry Road To Tramoo Via Westgarthtown

5C

Main Street, The Boulevard And Mckimmies

5D

Settlement Road

Highest  
Priority 2022  
Community  
Engagement

6

#### HIGH STREET SPINE TRANSFORMATION

In the long term ensure High Street Spine in Thomastown and Lalor transformed to meet the needs of the future.

7

#### MAXIMISE PERMEABILITY ACROSS FREEWAYS

Ensure vehicle, pedestrian and cycling are safely connected over the E6.

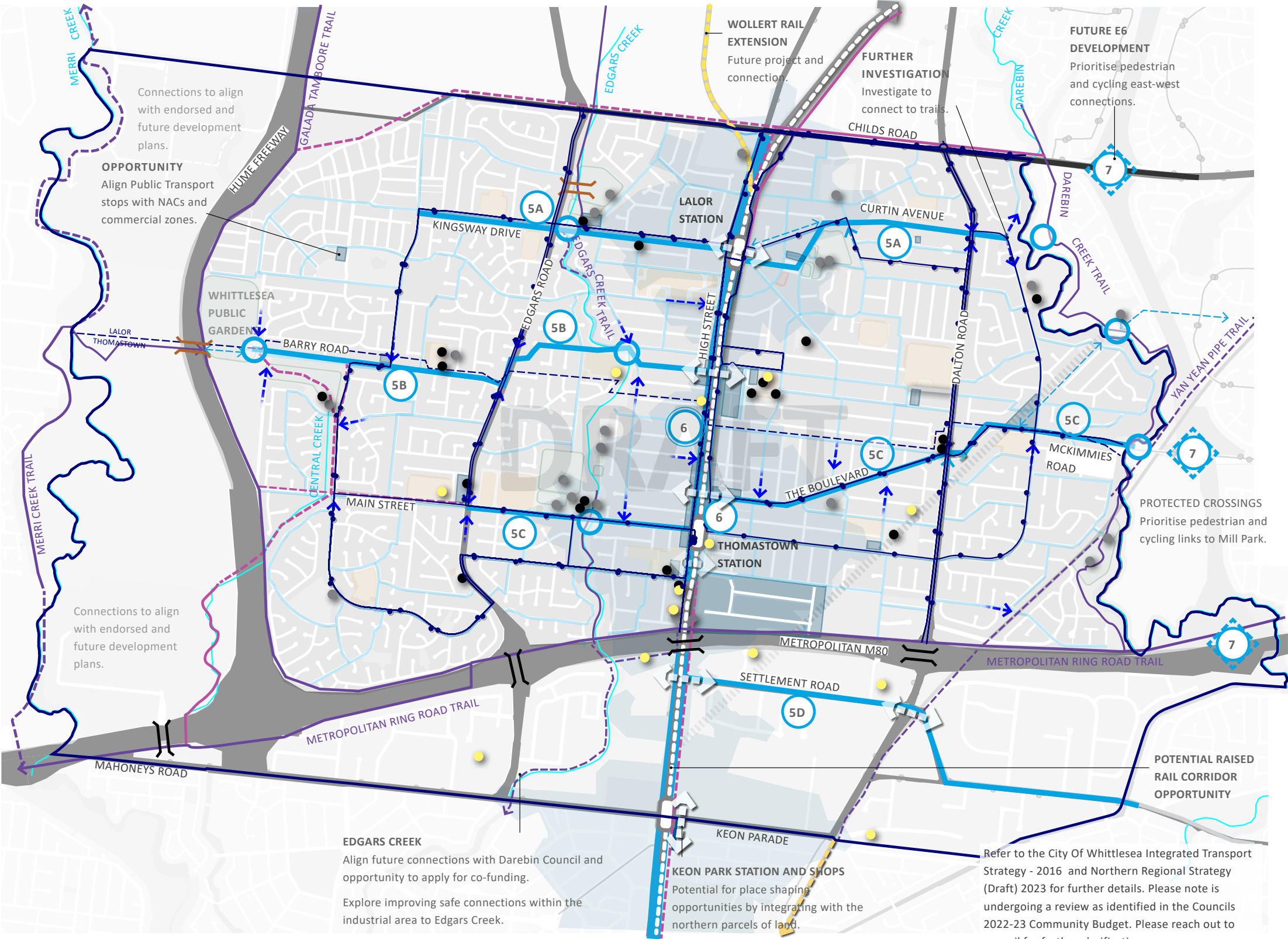
Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

LEGEND

- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
- State Freeway/Roads
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Creek line
- Rail + transit hub
- 1000m walkable catchment from train stations
- Wollert rail extension
- Bridge
- Pedestrian bridge
- Recreation use
- Schools + library use
- Community use
- Health use
- Commercial 1 and 2 Zones
- Streets
- Key trails (existing and proposed)
- Key regional trails (existing and proposed)
- Community buildings
- Sports buildings
- Places of worship buildings

OPPORTUNITIES

- High Street spine transformation corridor
- East-west connections
- Key streets (future investigations)
- East-West (pedestrian and cycling)
- Key trail connection
- Potential E6 barrier
- Improve connections along Arterial Roads
- Safe connections
- Opportunities location



Refer to the City Of Whittlesea Integrated Transport Strategy - 2016 and Northern Regional Strategy (Draft) 2023 for further details. Please note is undergoing a review as identified in the Councils 2022-23 Community Budget. Please reach out to council for further clarification.

Connected Places Plan



Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

GOALS

ENHANCED CONNECTIONS

Enhance connections (primarily east-west) to provide a high quality travel experience for pedestrians, cyclist that celebrate features along these routes.

General

- Utilise Movement Place methodology to identify and balance the needs of different transport modes.
- Enhance “places of activity” (transit hubs, local shops, community centres, employment areas, open spaces) and trails by:
  - Improve safety of streets that provide direct connection to primary destinations for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. (Road treatments, pedestrian crossing priority etc).
  - Reduced speeds of streets to serve local land use.
  - Enhance amenity and functionality of streets that encourages social interaction.
  - Improve access to end of trip facilities to support users.
  - Improve public transport connections and timetabling.

Barry Road to Tramoo Avenue via Westgarthtown

- Improve wayfinding to Whittlesea Gardens and regional trails.
- Employ a palette of materials that reflect and are sensitive to the Westgarthtown heritage of the location. These materials can also support embedded wayfinding and character.
- Identify opportunities to improve visual and physical links between Edgars Creek and German Lane.

Main Street to The Boulevard and McKimmies Road

- Promote community uses along this Main Street through streetscape design.
- Extend Thomastown Station as a precinct into the street and design of Station Street and The Boulevard.
- Prioritise active travel along The Boulevard through raised pavements where side streets intersect the route.

Settlement Road

- Improve safety by minimising vehicle crossings and increasing canopy cover.

REGIONAL TRAILS

Ensure high quality regional trail networks are connected and benefit the local community.

General

- Shared path connections to be safe, direct and to be an interesting experience between key routes.
- Community inter-modal infrastructure such as end of trip facilities, bicycle storage, bicycle repair/tyre inflation and parking at stations to be provided and easily accessible at the key nodes/destinations.
- Future freeway planning for E6 to ensure east-west regional connections are maintained and enhanced.

High Street Trail

- Enhance High Street trail to become a key element of the regional rail trail north to Whittlesea Township.

Edgars Creek Trail

- Deliver missing sections of the trail.
- Consider decking of the trail where the topography is challenging.
- Provide an alternate connection to the trail along Austarc Avenue from High Street.
- Prioritise the Edgars Creek pedestrian and cycling crossings for all east-west streets

Galada Tamboore Trail and Merri Creek Trail

- Improve wayfinding signage in Thomastown and Lalor to strengthen connections to the trail.

Darebin Creek Trail

- Identify and strengthen connections to the Darebin Creek Trail from adjoining residential areas.

Metropolitan Ring Road Trail

- Improve connections from residential and industrial areas to this trail.

Yan Yean / Northern Pipe Track

- Deliver the missing link in this trail from Keon Parade to Darebin Creek.

HIGH STREET AS A PLACE

Build on High Street’s role as a central commercial hub and transform it over time into a high quality urban place.

General

- Improve safety at night at key nodes with warm lighting and layering of lights to improve people’s perception of space.
- Reduce the visual impact of the large station car parks on the public realm through improved landscaping.
- Improve north-south pedestrian cycling paths and strategic pedestrian priority east-west crossing points. Such as Thomastown Station, Station Street to Tramoo Street and Lalor Station to Rochdale Square.

High Street Transformation

- Improve all modes of movement to reduce congestion (i.e. improve active modes of transport to reduce vehicular traffic), and reconnect Thomastown and Lalor with a holistic solution rather than separate projects.
- Enhance High Street Corridor to be of high activity and highly utilised by the community, such as a mix of public realm, community space and commercial hubs.
  - Public realm to be mix of passive and active uses such as pocket parks, basketball courts, urban parks, exercise areas and seating.
  - Community spaces could include council owned working hubs, temporary social housing
  - Commercial hubs could include temporary commercial containers, start up enterprises etc.
- Ensure future developments do not compromise place shaping solutions.

Findings from ‘20-minute neighbourhood’ Program

- Remove physical barriers to walkability that leads to NACs to unlock community access.
- Walkability/cycling (e.g. east-west) is significantly impacted by the physical barriers of railway, roads and overall poor connections such as a lack of traffic lights and priority signalising.
- Disjointed public transport system, particularly the bus network, and its relationship to the PPTN and NACs.
- The barrier effect of the railway north-south has significant negative effects on pedestrian and cycling connectivity and movement.
- People are likely to use higher order centres, not NACs, if using cars.

OPPORTUNITIES

SHAPING THOMASTOWN AND LALOR

5 WEST CONNECTIONS

- 5.1 Utilise and support **Movement and Plan Framework** to prioritise projects and direct funding.
- 5.2 Apply the ‘**Streets For People Report**’ (or similar) to further review of road networks and provide recommendations and prioritise projects.
- 5.3 Advocate for **suitable PTV timetabling and rerouting that meets the needs to Thomastown and Lalor.**

6 HIGH STREET TRANSFORMATION

Highest Priority 2022 Community Consultation

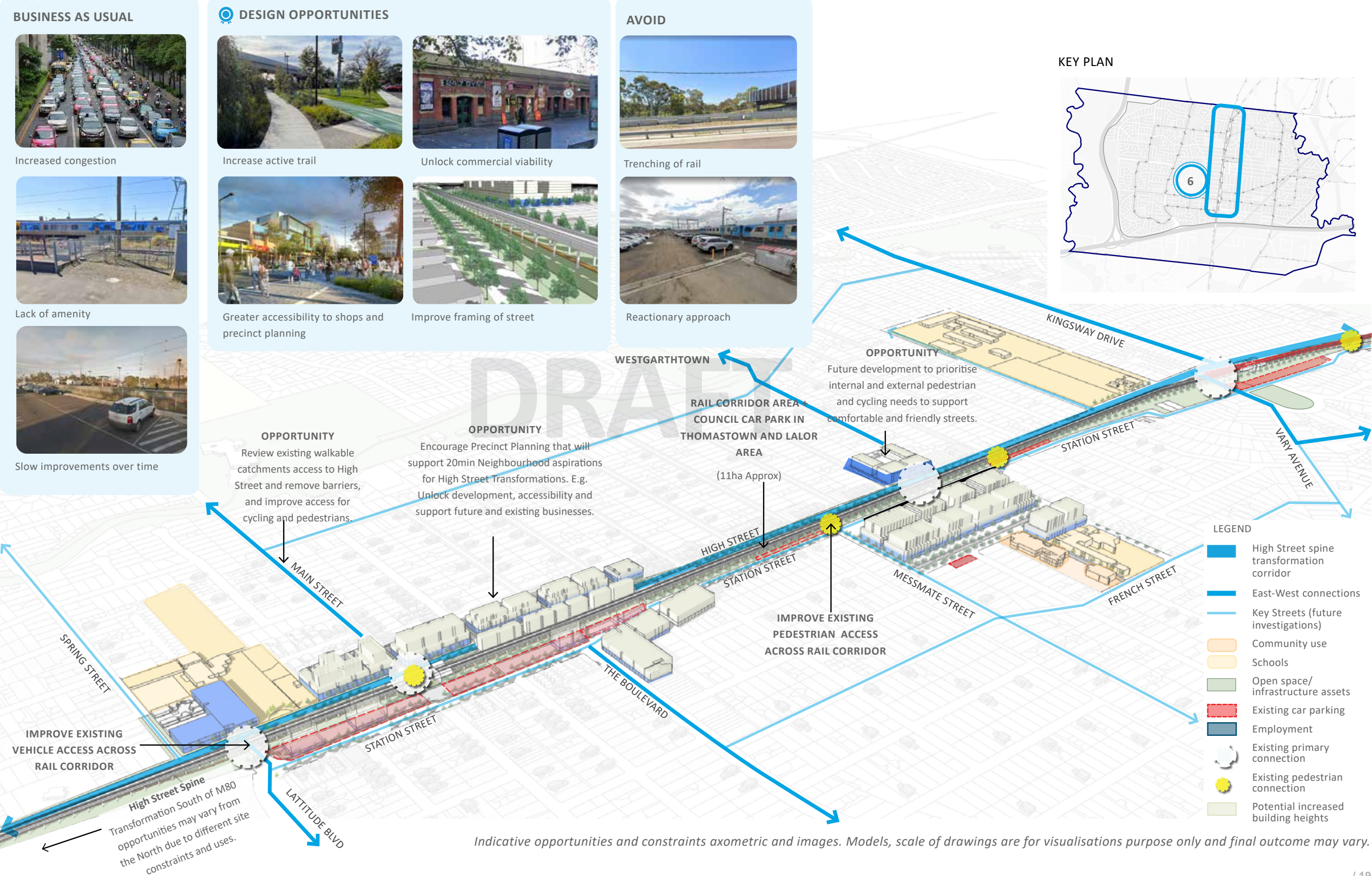
- 6.1 Advocate for a **Transformative High Street solution(s)** through Thomastown and Lalor to improve connections, access, public transport permeability and access, and improve social and environment benefit.
- 6.2 Advocate for Transformative High Street to be considered for future policy.

7 MAXIMISE PERMEABILITY ACROSS FREEWAYS

- 7.1 Advocate for the **Street for People Report** to ensure movement permeability and consideration for all uses.
- 7.2 **Advocate to federal and state bodies for funding, support and implement change.** E.g. Victorian Government, Infrastructure Australia Infrastructure Victoria.



6 HIGH STREET SPINE TRANSFORMATION – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES







*"I want to do things that are important to me with people from my area."*

*"These suburbs where I live need more places to gather or exercise."*

*"I love TRAC and the library."*

*May Street precinct had the highest priority in this theme*



**KEY 20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD HALLMARKS / W2040 COUNCIL GOAL**

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**  
*Connected Community Strategy and Action Plan  
8 to 80 Cities*

SHARED LOCAL CULTURE

Thomastown and Lalor community hubs encourage connection, community ownership and participation. They celebrate cultural identity, provide dynamic learning, support passive and active uses and are places to gather for people of all ages, genders and abilities.

GOALS



WELCOMING PRECINCTS



CULTURALLY CELEBRATED CIVIC PLAZAS



INFORMAL SPACES

OPPORTUNITIES

Highest Priority  
2022 Community  
Engagement



MAY STREET PRECINCT

Build upon the strong community culture and continue to be heart to many residents.



WESTGARTHTOWN PRECINCT

A precinct of rich history where opportunities are authentic to place.



MAIN STREET PRECINCT

A place of dynamic learning and recreation with facilities and programs for 0-18 years of age pathways in one place.



PETER LALOR PRECINCT

A place of young people and community that has strong sense of community ownership that goes beyond the 8am-5pm workday cycle.

Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

LEGEND

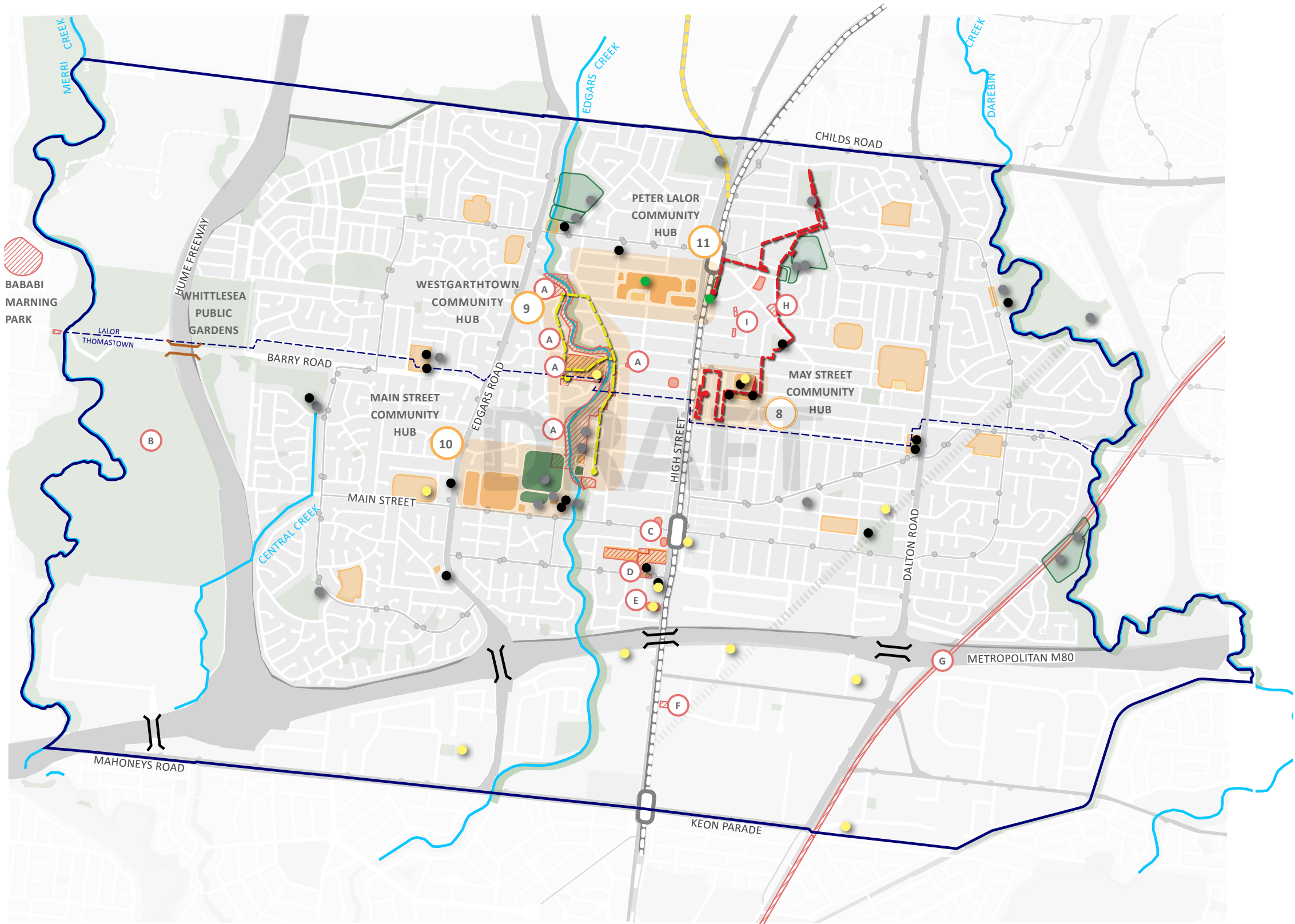
- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
- State Freeway/Roads
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Creek line
- Rail + transit hub
- Wollert rail extension
- Heritage overlay

HERITAGE AREAS

- A Westgarthtown Heritage and Lutheran Church and Cemetery and Zeibells Farm
- B Glada Tamboore
- C Methodist Cemetery Heritage Areas
- D Thomastown Primary School Brick House Heritage Area
- E Uniting Church and Peppercorn Trees Heritage Area
- F Fowlers Pottery Heritage Factory Building
- G Yan Yean Water Supply System Heritage Place
- H Lalor Fire Station
- I Peter Lalor Housing Cooperative Precinct Heritage House
- Recreation use
- Schools + library use
- Community use
- Health use
- Community building
- Sports building
- Place of worship buildings
- Community gardens
- Peter lalor walk
- Westgarthtown walk
- Bridge
- Pedestrian bridge

OPPORTUNITIES

- X Opportunities location
- Community hubs



Shared Local Culture Plan



## Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

## GOALS

## WELCOMING PRECINCTS

Local precincts are welcoming and form strong synergies between different community services for the community benefit.

## General

- Ensure community hubs have the facilities and services to provide a range of social infrastructure to meet the unique needs of the local community.
- Increase viability of precincts with direct access between land uses and movement permeability.
- Improve general activation of the community precincts by utilising open space or temporary road closure to deliver events such as festivals, craft and fresh food markets, 'Ride and Stride', 'Playable Streets', 'Bush and Play' and Walking Thomastown.
- Enhance precincts by ensuring facilities and programs considers a space for 0-25 years of age to gather, linger and to learn.
- Improve interface to community hub to draw people in with street and increase community participation by exploring alternative fencing treatments and landscaping opportunities.

## Main Street Precinct

- Improve the synergy between the various land uses by removing the barriers and create a central, safe and direct path from Thomastown West Primary School, Bubup William Aboriginal Child and Family centre, Thomastown Secondary College to the Main Street Recreation Reserve and Edgars Creek.
- Improve the sense of arrival of the precinct with landscape embellishment, signage and furnishing.

## Peter Lalor Precinct

- Improve visitation to key community buildings by creating shared internal places for people to gather.

## May Street/French Street

- Improve May Road Precinct by leveraging off commercial activity with cultural and community gathering spaces, and co locating community services and institutions.
- Explore temporary May Road closure for outdoor community events and performances.
- Enhance Lane Between French Street and May Road permeability by providing and prioritising pedestrians accessibility and landscape embellishment.

## CULTURALLY CELEBRATED CIVIC PLACES

Community buildings are designed to invite entry, encourage dwelling and project a civic presence that celebrates culture.

## General

- Improve resilience of precincts by renovating aging infrastructure and buildings to support re-adaptability and multi-use during non-contact hours for multiple community groups.
- Enhance community places by ensuring buildings within precincts have interesting architectural style and material palette that enhance the character of the area. (Refer to built environment for further guidance)
- A well connected hub that supports a place for people of all ages to age in place, linger, gather and celebrate their culture and identity.
- Enhance safety and comfort of precincts by increasing passive surveillance with overlooking public community spaces, programming out of hours building uses and increasing community group participation.
- Increase the visibility and connection of cultural spaces through signage and materiality. E.g. Westgarthtown, various heritage and Aboriginal gathering spaces.
- Enhance connection to country by considering place naming as an opportunity to celebrate local culture.
- Integrate public art into spaces to celebrate and reflect local culture.
- Improve community integration by ensuring wayfinding infrastructure identifies key cultural locations on maps and includes the top 5 local languages (other than English). In Thomastown and Lalor they are mainly Arabic, Italian, English, Macedonian, Indian and Vietnamese.

*Refer to 2021 Census, Australian Bureau of Statistics.*

## Westgarthtown

- Improve cultural connection to Thomastown and Lalor by integrating the local indigenous community (Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung) and the Zeibells Farmhouse Museum, Lutheran Church and Cemetery and Heritage Garden Friends of Westgarthtown for future master planning.
- Enhance and strengthen Westgarthtown open space qualities.

## INFORMAL SPACES

Informal spaces such as plazas, parks, neighbourhood centres and streets to support community integration.

## General

- Enhance public spaces by including free-wifi delivered in key locations with spaces for community to work, study and online entertainment.
- Enhance ownership of space and participation by supporting community place making opportunities by providing resources to various groups to enable change.
- Purposeful landscaping improvements to create spaces where people can meet, gather, share their culture and feel a sense of pride for their area and empower them to take ownership of space.
- Enhance educational opportunities by supporting dynamic learning with shared land uses, facilities and knowledge.
- Enhance the series of spaces and services around the hubs that meet the need of the community.
- Improve community participation within precincts by supporting shared infrastructure between community groups and support facilities to be utilised outside regular hours.



*Zeibel's Farmhouse. Heritage buildings to be celebrated and embraced.*

## Findings from '20-minute neighbourhood' Program

- Review gaps in the service delivery for Thomastown and Lalor by supporting co-locating community services and institutions within to improve activity and access to services in a walkable local context.
- Sponsoring/supporting retailing and community festivals and other place based activities.
- Education facilities play significant economic and social roles to supporting many NACs and Health facilities can provide a niche focus for some NACs.

## OPPORTUNITIES

## SHAPING THOMASTOWN AND LALOR

8 MAY STREET PRECINCT  
Highest Priority 2022 Community Engagement

- 8.1 **Advocate for annual events/festivals** within the precinct to celebrate the community and various cultures.

## 9 WESTGARTHTOWN PRECINCT

- 9.1 **Investigate to prepare a masterplan** to create a vision the site.

## 10 MAIN STREET PRECINCT

- 10.1 **Investigate to prepare master planning** especially for lane way between Main Street and French Street.

## 11 PETER LALOR PRECINCT

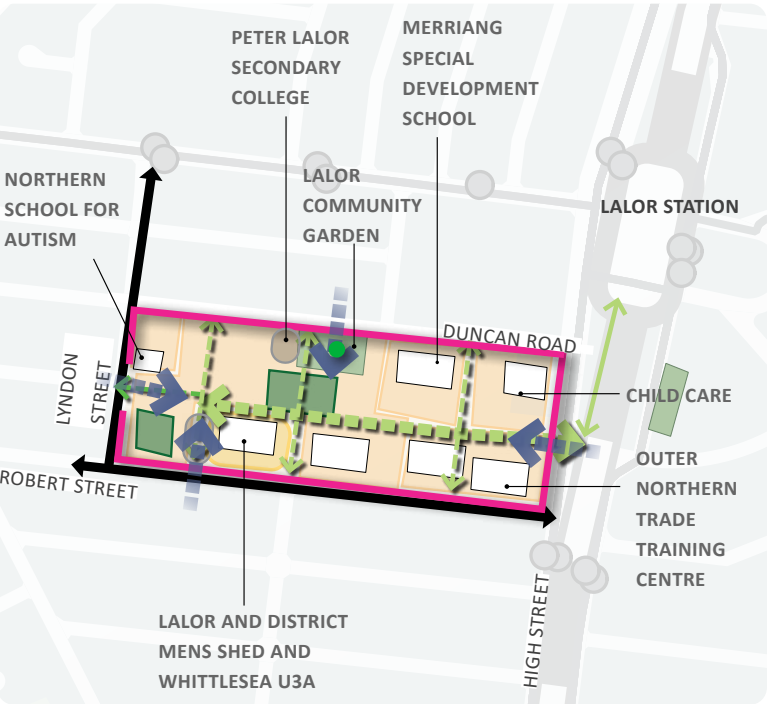
- 11.1 **Trial 'Playable Streets' (or similar) project** for non priority roads to promote cycling, play and interaction for children.

## 8 9 10 11 ALL PRECINCTS

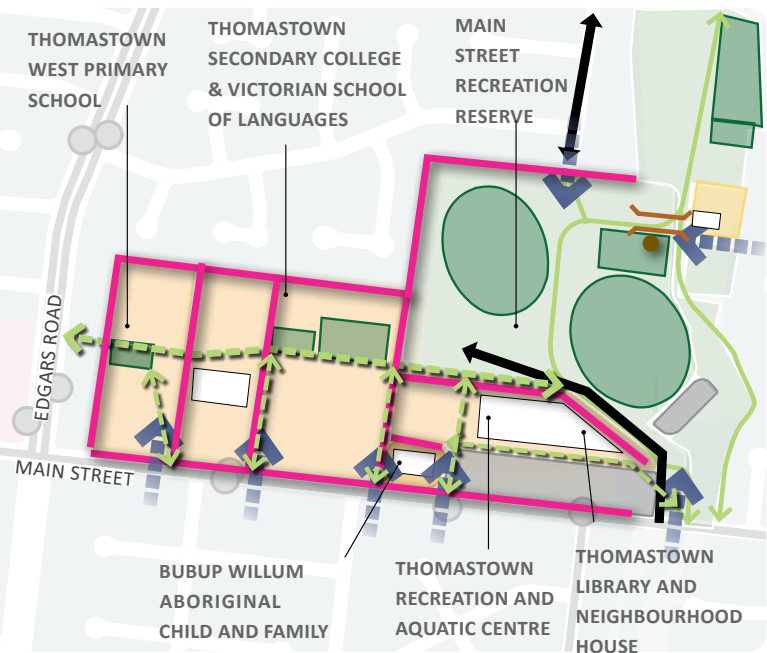
- Support and investigate services that will improve the community viability of these centres.
- Place Planning: Consider hubs as a collection of land- uses to design, identify lacking services, design qualities, prioritise and direct civil development projects
- Investigate to support findings from the 20 minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program nearby NAC's.
- Investigate to improve social housing stock near precincts.
- Advocate for funding streams to for state opportunities to foster land use improvement.
- Form partners for placemaking initiatives.
- Investigate to ensure there are youth spaces (12-25 years of age) to linger, gather and learn at key transit and commercial nodes. E.g. Corner of the Boulevard and Station Street Shops as part of a pop-up or renewal projects.
- Integrate public art into spaces to celebrate and reflect local culture.

COMMUNITY HUBS

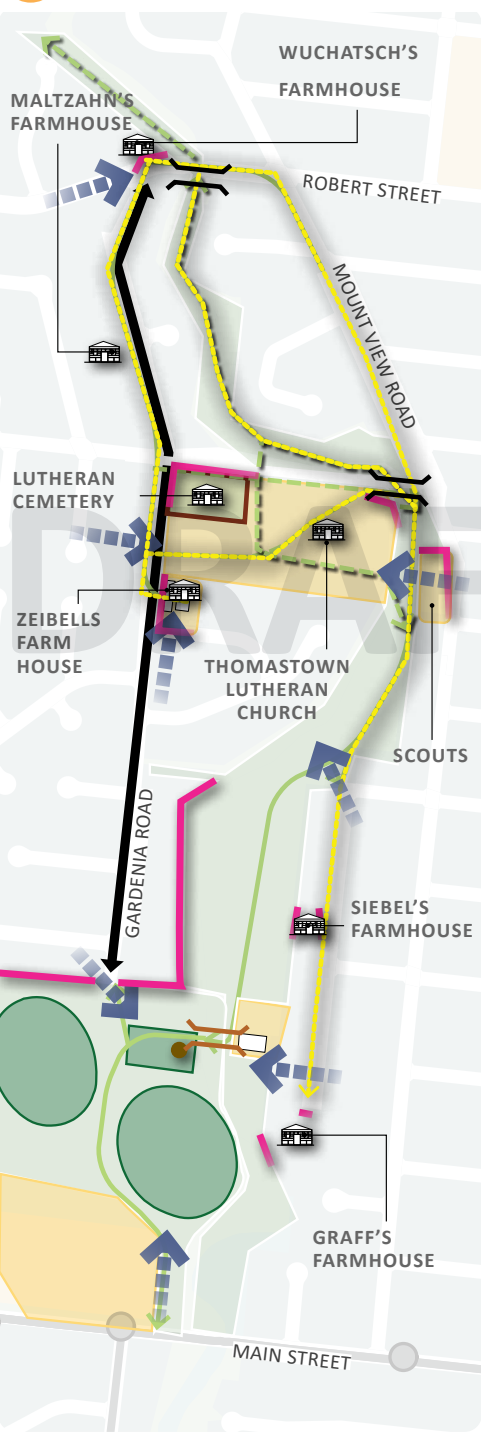
11 PETER LALOR PRECINCT



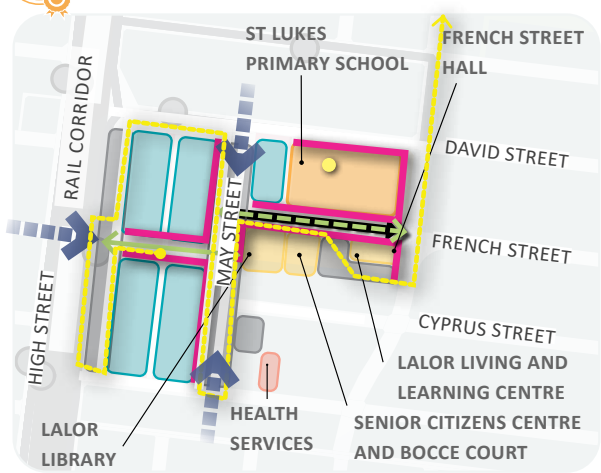
10 MAIN STREET



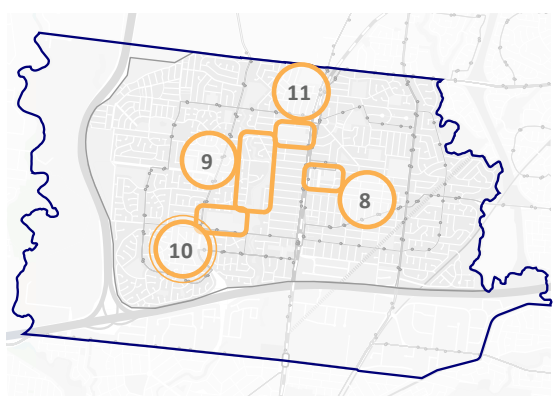
9 WESTGARTHTOWN HUB



8 MAY STREET



KEY PLAN



LEGEND

- Playable Streets opportunities
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Existing cycling and pedestrian networks
- Potential future key cycling and pedestrian networks
- Heritage walk trail
- Recreation use (shared as part of precinct)
- Open space (shared as part of precinct)
- Schools + library use
- Community use
- Car-park
- Potential interface improvements
- Dry stone wall
- Potential building for use outside regular school hours
- Commercial buildings
- Key access
- Heritage building locations
- Place of worship buildings
- Community gardens
- Gathering space



Master planning May Street to unlock public realm potential (as per above).

Various Community Hubs





## VIBRANT CENTRES AND INDUSTRIES

Thomastown and Lalor's dynamic, resilient and strong economy strengthened by existing businesses attracting jobs now, and of the future.

### GOALS



INCLUSIVE AND DYNAMIC LOCAL ECONOMY FOR ALL



VIBRANT, VIABLE AND ATTRACTIVE NACS



ACTIVE RETAIL SPINE AND MOVEMENT CORRIDOR

### OPPORTUNITIES

Highest Priority  
2022 Community  
Engagement



REIMAGINED BUSINESS PLACES

12A MAY ROAD SHOPPING PRECINCT

12A HIGH STREET PRECINCT

Maximise business opportunity in each place by increasing density, improve vibrancy, interfaces and the public realm.



13 TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION PROGRAM - PLACE MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

Identify key strategic NACs for capital works interventions and enhancements.



14 INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Build on established businesses and uses to innovate, uplift, improve amenity and intensify (where appropriate) employment densities.

#### PRECINCTS:

14A Trawalla  
14B Mahoneys Road  
14C High Street West  
14D Intersection Of Keon Parade And High Street

14E Dalton Road Homemaker  
14F Dalton Road North  
14G Settlement Road East  
14H Cooper Street South-West



Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

LEGEND

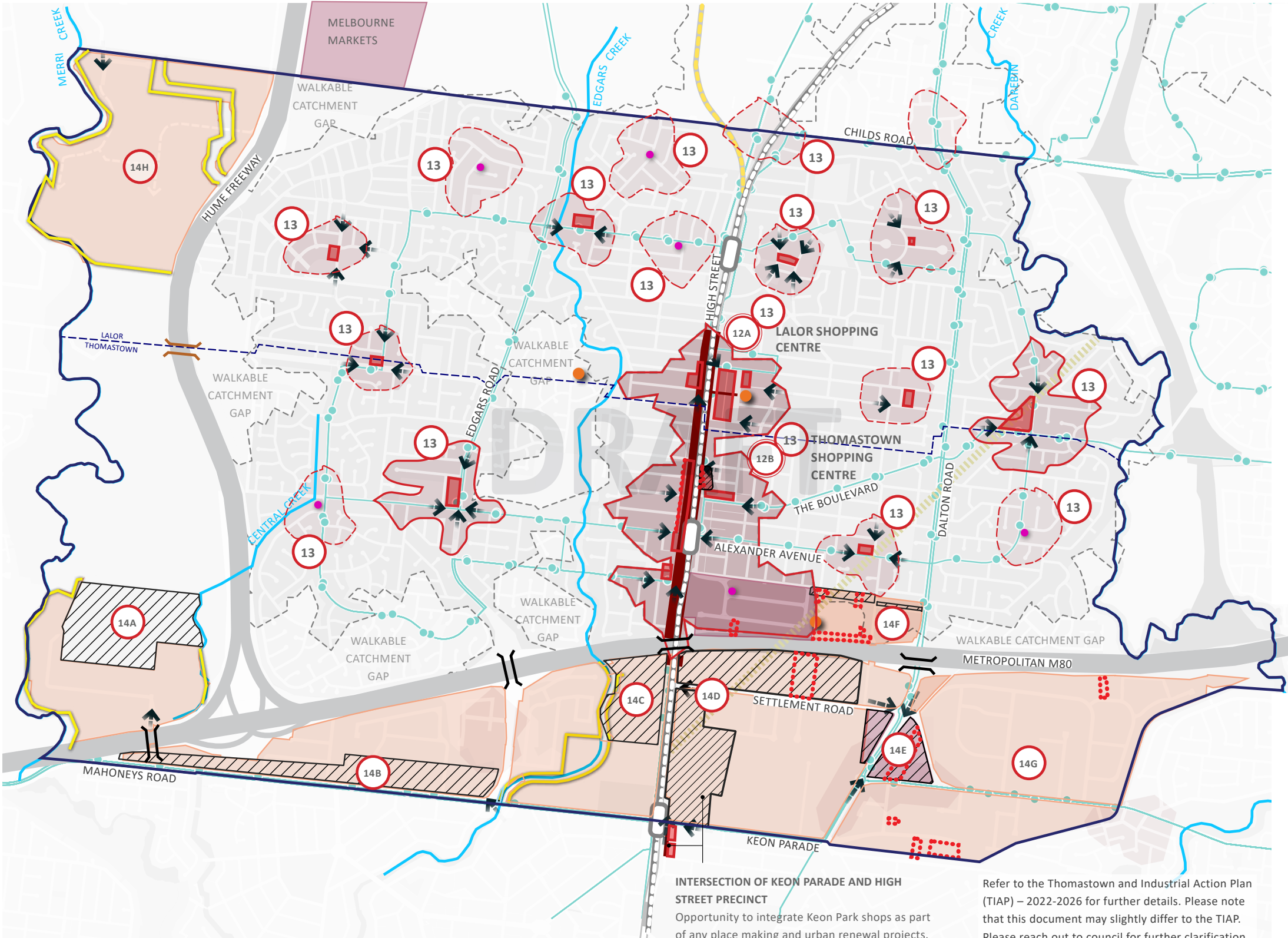
- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
- State Freeway/Roads
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Creek line invert
- Rail
- Bridge
- Pedestrian bridge
- Wollert rail extension
- Commercial zones/NAC's /convenience stores
- Industrial areas

OPPORTUNITIES

- Renewal opportunities
- Higher priority area for improvement
- Lower priority area for improvement
- Tourism opportunity
- Key street – high activity
- Key connections
- Opportunities location
- Vacant/underutilised site opportunities (future investigation required)
- Industrial open space interface opportunities

WALKABLE CATCHMENTS

- 800m from all Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC's)
- 400m from Lalor and Thomastown Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NACs)
- 400m from Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NACs)
- 200m from Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NACs)



Vibrant Centres and Industries Plan

Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

GOALS

INCLUSIVE AND DYNAMIC LOCAL ECONOMY FOR ALL

Dynamic economy to draw businesses to support current, and future employment opportunities.

General

- Actively encourage local employment opportunities and availability at all NACs sizes (Large, medium and small).
- Consider the social roles and demographics of residents, especially women with children, when encouraging local employment.

Resilient

- Ensure an adequate supply of employment land is maintained into the future.
- Increase household accessibility to NACs and local businesses within a 800m radius.
- Enhance NACs by supporting and encouraging lacking services such as pharmacy, newsagent and post office.
- Increase the share of higher order and professional services and knowledge workers by supporting investment into the area.
- Improve local workers’ presence by advocating for co-working hubs and public facilities within all NACs.
- Increase economic resilience by ensuring that commercial buildings (new or retrofit) accommodate expansion and contraction of businesses that minimise obsolescence of sites to encourage current and future employment opportunities.

Accessible

- Improve council’s accessibility to businesses and actively foster economic and commercial relationships with the private industries to facilitate urban renewal and redevelopment to unlock new economies and industries.

Industrial Areas

- Increase Thomastown and Lalor labour force education profile by prioritising greater business floor space for intensification of industry along public transport routes and key destinations.
- Industrial zones to include a diverse mix of industrial land uses by supporting current businesses and facilitating jobs of the future.
- Improve industrial precincts by encouraging and supporting facilities for workers. E.g. Cafes and local parks.
- Improve safety and connectivity to support labor force access and industrial viability.
- Ensure development applications meet the needs of the existing community and the vision for the area with supportive contextual and business case analysis. (Generally areas within renewal opportunities).

VIBRANT, VIABLE AND ATTRACTIVE NACS

Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NACs) will be vibrant, supportive destinations that meet the everyday needs of the local community.

General

- Increase social infrastructure and amenity (built and natural) in all NACs to attract competitive businesses, investment opportunities, and workers' participation.
- Enhance sense of arrival to draw people into the shopping precincts. E.g. Gateways, facade treatments, forecourts or plazas provides visual interest that enables lingering.
- Improve the image and amenity of the area to encourage existing businesses to invest and upgrade facilities.
- Improve tourism opportunities within Thomastown and Lalor through precinct branding and place making.
- Improve business presence with inclusive signage to make people from all cultures, genders, identities and abilities feel welcome and safe.
- Support shop front improvements to ensure high quality standards are met.
- Improve wayfinding treatments from businesses to key destinations such as community hubs and train station. E.g Improve access from Main Street Community Hub and Thomastown Train Station to local businesses.
- Utilise public art that is multi functional/engaging for community and business benefits.

Innovation

- Improve innovation systems and/or networking co-hub spaces that attract businesses and draw more people into NACs.
- Encourage shared infrastructure to reduce costs and create mutual benefits for the private and public sectors.
- Increase NACs technological advancements to meet the changing needs of the community.

Intensification

- Improve NAC resilience through diversification and intensification of business.
- Enhance business viability with increased buildings heights, maximising residential and employment opportunities. Development intensification to avoid negative parking and open space implications.
- Improve the local economy by investigating underutilised/ vacant sites and foster relationships to unlock development opportunities.

ACTIVE RETAIL SPINE AND MOVEMENT CORRIDOR

High Street to be a thriving place for business and activity.

General

- Increase High Street’s opportunities by investigating strategic planning controls to support revitalisation and positive change.

Commercial Zones, NACs and Convenience Stores

- Increase and encourage outdoor trading along High Street to add to activity and vibrancy in the public realm.
- Enhance business opportunities by transforming the High Street/Rail Corridor freeing up access and land availability.
- Enhance place by embracing cultural opportunities to be integrated within businesses.
- Improve connections from surrounding employment precincts to support Whittlesea’s growing population.
- Increase support and viability of the night time economy.
- Support safety for all genders, all ages and abilities at all hours.

Industrial Areas

- Improve freight and traffic connectivity for Settlement Road by advocating for a level crossing removal or similar.
- Enhance the ‘Intersection of Keon Parade and High Street Precinct’ by supporting innovative and intensive warehouse/office development that does not compromise operation of existing businesses and assist in activating public realm.
- Improve opportunities for people to access jobs within a short distance of public transport.
- Enhance Trawalla Avenue Precinct with redevelopment that achieves environmental, open space outcomes that increase economic investment.
- Investigate to improve amenity in the Thomastown Lalor industrial precincts.

Findings from ‘20-minute Neighbourhood’ Program

- Health facilities play significant economic and social roles to support many and at times provide a niche focus, adding to its sense of place.
- Increase residential densities and housing diversity around all by applying planning controls to support commercial vibrancy.
- Building on existing NAC strengths, allowing for specialisation and synergies to evolve with a particular focus on the arts, creative industries and particular retailing niches such as food and beverage production and consumption.

OPPORTUNITIES SHAPING THOMASTOWN AND LALOR

12

REIMAGINED BUSINESS PLACES  
Highest Priority 2022 Community Engagement

- 12.1 Investigate to **apply recommendations from the 20 minute neighbourhood pilot program** to Thomastown and Lalor NACs.
- 12.2 Investigate the need for evidence based master planning/development guidelines that may lead to future planning controls. Economic Assessments, Residential Capacity Review, (or similar) are evidence based mechanisms that can influence change.

13

TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION

- 13.1 **Promote targeted programs**, exhibitions, festivals and markets to increase marketability. E.g. Made in Lalor.
- 13.2 Investigate **Place Planning** to ensure authenticity of areas are well designed.
- 13.3 **Continue town centre revitalisation roll-out and deliver capital works programs** to deliver outcomes that are authentic to the place and have high community and economic value.

14

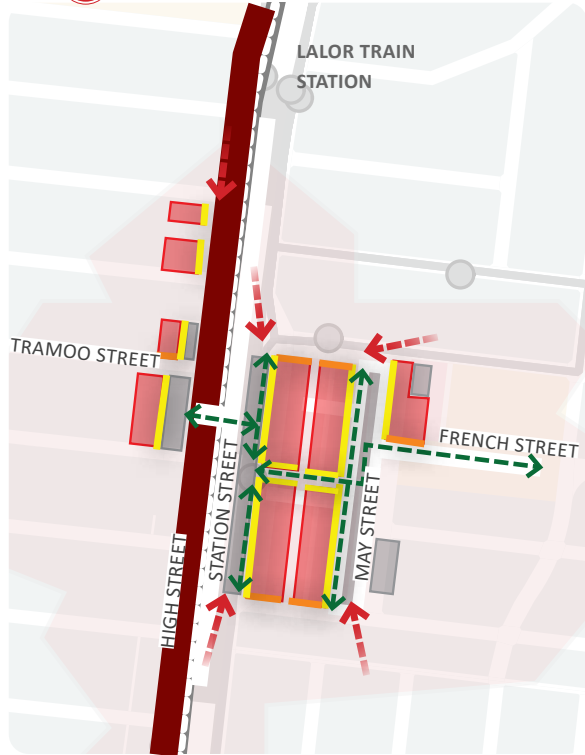
INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- 14.1 Attract sufficient investment from government to seed development and uplift the area.
- 14.2 **Unlock future renewal** and development opportunities by partnering with developers and government bodies to improve industrial areas.
- 14.3 **Promote Smart City initiatives** to support the changing needs of Thomastown and Lalor businesses. E.g. Free Wifi, QR code navigation, Smart Parking, Data sensory and management.
- 14.4 Support council initiatives by actively promoting and working with business owners to address retail vacancy issues. E.g. **‘Buy Locally’** and **‘Vacant To Vibrant.’**

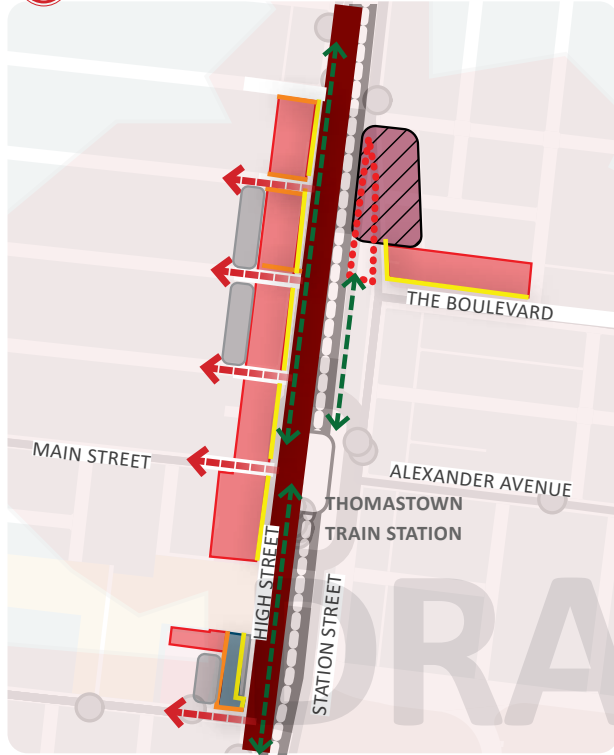


12 REIMAGINED BUSINESS PLACES

12A TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION – MAY STREET

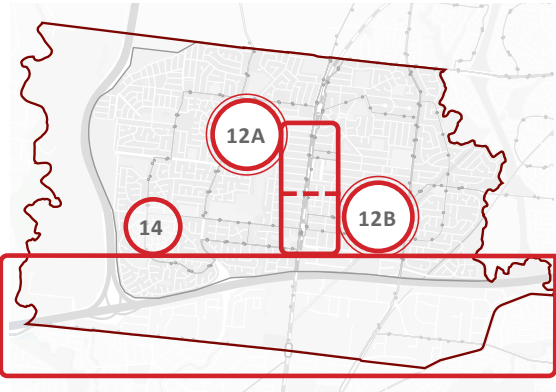


12A TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION – HIGH STREET



Commercial/industrial Desired built form outcomes. Opportunity to foster economic hubs that will provide open space, well landscaped outcomes where employees and business love to work.

KEY PLAN



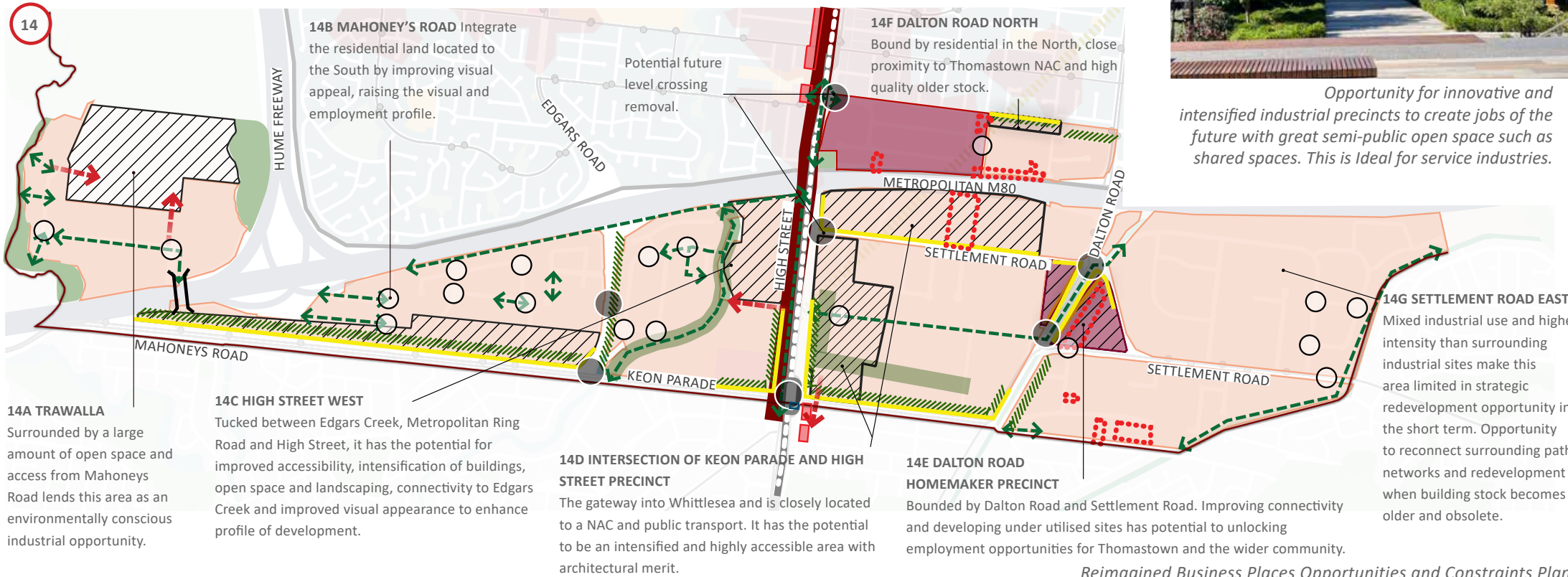
14 INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT LOCAL INDUSTRIAL OPPORTUNITIES



Opportunity for innovative and intensified industrial precincts to create jobs of the future with great semi-public open space such as shared spaces. This is ideal for service industries.

LEGEND

- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
- Rail
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Key street connection
- Key pedestrian/cycling connection
- Commercial Zones/ NAC's
- 400m walkable catchment
- Industrial areas
- Renewal opportunities
- Existing car park
- Primary interface
- Secondary interface
- Critical intersection
- Critical vehicle access
- High street transformation
- Landscape enhancement
- Open space corridors
- Vacant/underutilised site opportunities (future investigation required)



Reimagined Business Places Opportunities and Constraints Plans.





ENHANCED CHARACTER

New developments in Thomastown and Lalor will be high quality, respecting and enhancing local character and culture. Built form will provide a high quality interface to public spaces and improve liveability for all.

GOALS

- ACTIVATED PUBLIC SPACES
- ENHANCED CHARACTER AND IDENTITY
- FOCUSSED URBAN RENEWAL

OPPORTUNITIES

- 15 **PREPARE INDUSTRIAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES**  
Support businesses to succeed environmentally, socially and economically.
  - 16 **BUSINESS AS USUAL (BAU) – DESIGN EXCELLENCE**  
High quality developments that enhance Thomastown and Lalor built form.
  - 17 **IDENTIFY CONTROLS OR GUIDELINES TO INFLUENCE HIGHER QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**  
Provide guidance for future development and appropriate built form.
- Equal Highest Priority 2022 Community Engagement

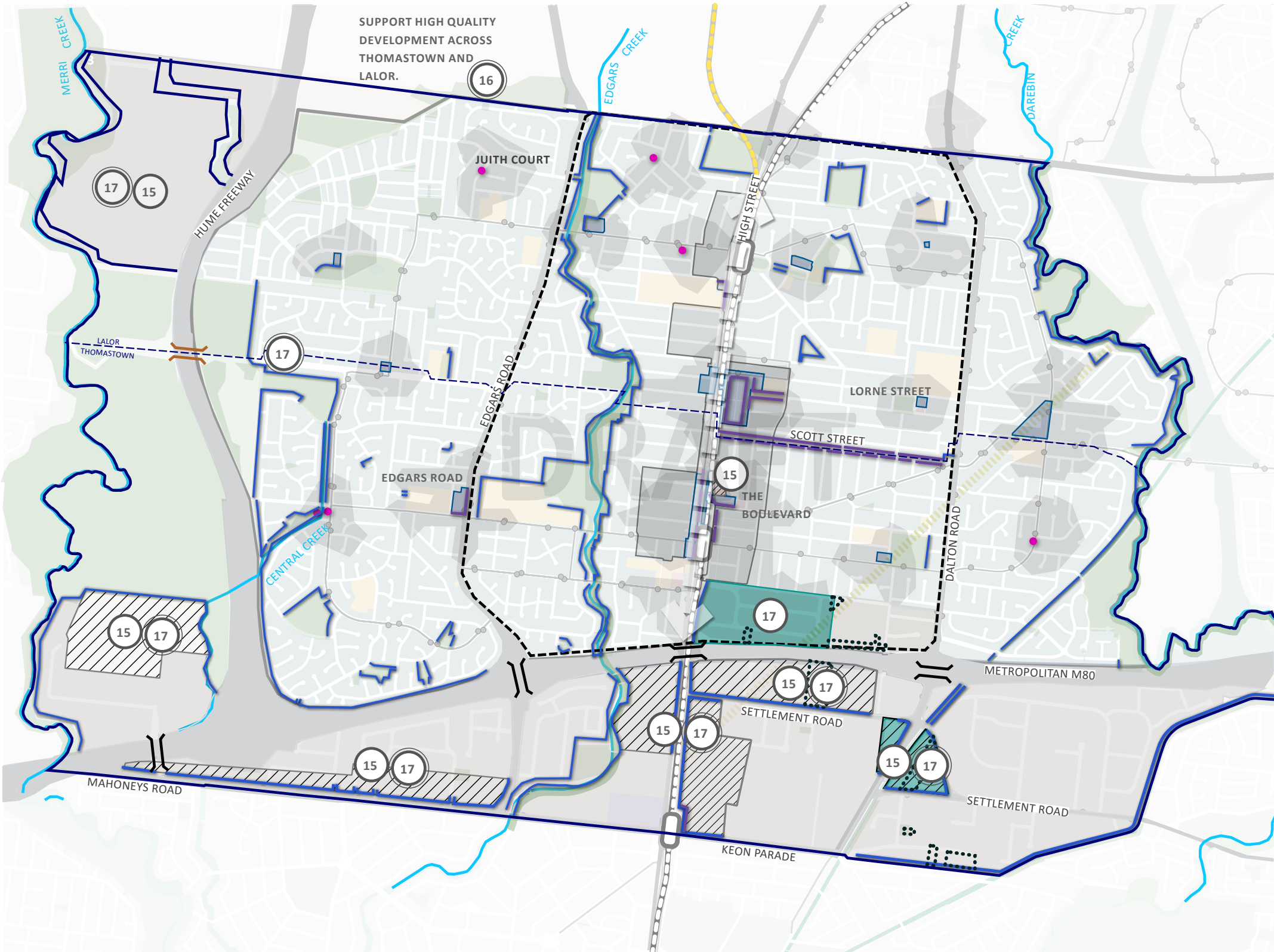
Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

LEGEND

- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
- Rail
- Existing bus routes and stops
- Bridge
- Pedestrian bridge
- Creek line invert
- Existing open space
- Commercial zones/ NAC's/convenience stores
- Industrial areas
- Residential Growth Zone

OPPORTUNITIES

- Urban renewal area (Northern Metro Region 2050 Plan)
- Industrial renewal opportunities
- Open space interface improvement
- Road interface improvement
- High street corridor car parking investigation
- Opportunities location
- Vacant/underutilised site opportunities (future investigation required)
- Walkable catchments from NAC's (potential capital deliver improvements)



Enhance Character Plan



Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

GOALS

ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES

Buildings to include active uses at ground level and incorporate features that improve natural surveillance to ensure people feel safe, and comfortable in public areas and streets.

Commercial zones, NACs and convenience stores

- Activate frontages to provide visual interest, places for interaction, and visual connections between internal and external spaces.
- Investigate the viability of upper storey development and use of air rights to increase surveillance of the public realm and general activity in commercial areas.
- Avoid blank walls, visually uninteresting and inactive frontages in key pedestrian areas.
- Support a material palette that adds to a sense of place and tells the cultural story of Thomastown and Lalor.
- Utilise architectural and public realm features at key intersections to enhance a sense of arrival and experience.
- Ensure new developments provide awnings and glazed façades to High Street to maintain an active frontage that provides weather protection.
- Ensure architectural treatments to express the main entry and incorporate contemporary, high quality materials.
- Utilise events and programming to activate public realm.

Community facilities

- Improve community facilities public realm spaces with spillout areas that are well landscaped and incorporate local or cultural art as a part of building entries.

Industrial areas

- Screen fencing (when required) with planting and align built form setback to minimise visual impact.
- Encourage developments to incorporate connections through sites to improve permeability and walkability.

Development adjoining open space

- Where possible, provide active or semi-active frontages facing open space areas.
- Encourage upper storey built form with balconies in new developments overlooking public spaces.
- Encourage visually permeable and low fencing in developments adjoining open space.

Freeway Interfaces

- New developments to consider interface treatments and landscaping to secondary road frontages, including Metropolitan Ring Road, to improve the presentation of the area along key movement corridors.

QUALITY AND CHARACTER

New building developments to continue to reinforce Thomastown and Lalor’s cultural and visual identity.

General

- Define building entries at street level, through the use of awnings, architectural elements and colour to provide a sense of address and transitional space.
- Architectural design features should be contemporary, integrate with the surrounding existing built form of the area and adequately respond to the existing materials and finishes of the area.
- Celebrate the work of local artists in built form.
- Identify opportunities to reference local Aboriginal culture and local cultural heritage in built form.
- Ensure new development contributes to the general uplift and amenity of the industrial area through high quality materials, landscaping and articulation.
- Enhance Thomastown and Lalor climate change and environmental conscience with building design innovation. E.g. Mitigate flooding with design innovation for new development, roof top planting, rain gardens, etc.
- Buildings should celebrate character through diverse materials that create shadows, play of light on surfaces and textures that attract touch. Avoid simplistic and devoid of character outcomes.

Civic presence

- Civic buildings including community centres, libraries, schools and train stations have a key role to play in elevating development quality through contemporary and sensitive architectural responses to local context. These buildings should aim to improve public space interfaces.

Human Scale

- Ensure that human scale built form is maintained in higher density development over time through increased detailing at street level and upper level setbacks.

Gateways

- Create a sense of arrival at key locations including Thomastown Station, Lalor Station and Keon Park Station through enhanced landscaping, street treatments, and landmark architecture.

Commercial

- Retain the facade variety of key commercial streets including High Street, Station Street and May Road by ensuring that businesses retain their individual identity.
- Provide weather responsive overhangs and awnings along commercial frontages and key pedestrian walking routes.

FOCUSSED URBAN RENEWAL

New development in Thomastown and Lalor to be managed to ensure development is appropriate for the local context and improves liveability.

Locational priorities for renewal

- Encourage high change urban renewal within walking distance of Thomastown and Lalor NACs within either Commercial and/or within Residential Growth Zone areas.
- Encourage medium change within Edgars Road and Lalor Hub NACs walking catchments.
- Encourage upper level residential development above commercial uses along High Street and Station Street to maximise access to transport and services.

Land use transitions

- Ensure new development is sensitive to adjoining development through incremental changes in building setbacks, heights and articulation.
- Ensure transition areas between industrial, commercial and residential zones are treated to minimise impact on lower intensity uses.
- Improve visibility of centres through a corner site/built form treatments and of high architectural standards.

Large site redevelopment opportunities

- Utilise development opportunities on large sites adjoining Edgars Creek to improve site permeability and the interface with Edgars Creek and Marran Baba Parklands.
- Private, local or paper road provisions should be considered along the Edgars Creek to improve access and safety in open space.
- Avoid poor visual outcomes that front public realm. E.g. Avoid storage areas adjoining public realm.

Laneways

- Enhance laneways passive surveillance and pedestrian safety by supporting developments that positively address the public realm and review/limit vehicle accessibility.

Strategic Site Investigations

- Potential to review council and state owned sites to unlock social, housing, and economic opportunities.

Findings from ‘20-minute Neighbourhood’ Program

- Encourage higher population and dwelling density around through redevelopment of older housing stock and activate the ground plane
- Much of the housing stock around many NACs could be redeveloped to improve housing diversity and quality.
- Safety issues and concerns during both night and day.
- Often poor community perceptions of NACs.

OPPORTUNITIES

SHAPING THOMASTOWN AND LALOR

15 PREPARE INDUSTRIAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

- 15.1 Prepare Industrial Guidelines that improve the amenity of industrial areas to attract further investment and employment whilst protecting and recognising the existing businesses.

16 BUSINESS AS USUAL (BAU) – DESIGN EXCELLENCE  
Highest Priority 2022 Community Engagement

- 16.1 Urban Design advice and guidance for all development near NACs and along key strategic streets to support design excellence.

17 IDENTIFY CONTROLS OR GUIDELINES TO INFLUENCE HIGHER QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES  
Highest Priority 2022 Community Engagement

- 17.1 Developers are encouraged to engage with council early in the application process.
- 17.2 Consider the following controls and influences within Thomastown and Lalor:
  - Prepare and apply Neighbourhood Development Manual guidance for new development to ensure design quality
  - Prepare residential interface guidelines and investigate the use of planning controls to deliver high quality built form and improve passive surveillance onto open spaces and public realm. E.g. Key streets, residential backing onto open space and lane ways
  - Ensure developments maintains a visual appearance that is appropriate to scale and enhances neighbourhood character
  - Explore council key redevelopment sites along High Street and explore mechanisms to improve development outcomes. E.g. High Street Council owned car parking sites.
  - Explore undertaking master planning for identified industrial and underutilised sites and investigate the use of planning controls to deliver high quality built form
  - Provide guidance for urban renewal in key locations.



MATERIALS AND FINISHES PALETTE FOR THOMASTOWN AND LALOR

CIVIC BUILDINGS

In the public realm greys/blues have generally responded to the existing blue stone early settlement in either concrete colouring treatment or stones.

RESIDENTIAL

Heritage buildings are generally blue stone with corrugated roof, and a front white timber picket fence. Post war development (1950s onwards) incorporates warmer colours generally terracotta, creams, reds, oranges, browns and golds brick walls and low front fencing.

COMMERCIAL

Existing commercial areas tend to be a vibrant mix of colours and materials, with very little consistency of built form.

INDUSTRIAL

Older industrial areas use predominantly corrugated steel, brick and concrete. New industrial pockets utilise increased glazing and panelling.

EXISTING BUILDING INDICATORS



Baptcare Wattle Grove Community

- Earthy tones
- Perforated brown panels breaking up built form
- Expressed entry



Thomastown Meadows School

- Earthy tones with lower part brick
- Roofing resemble surrounding building heights and form



Mosaic Community Pavilion

- Warm colours panelling blended with brick that responds to the existing colours of the area



Spring Street Kindergarten

- Cool colours
- High quality concrete rendered cladding and coloured sheet metal



Cream brick 1950s-1960s

- Cream brick Veneer Walls
- Terracotta Roof
- Brick fence



Timber bungalow 1950s-1960s

- Cream brick. Mix of light and dark tones Terracotta Roof
- Timber Picket Fence



Mediterranean 1970s

- Earthy brick walls
- Brick fencing with ornamental features
- Terracotta Roof



Mission Brown 1970s-1980s and Mixed 1980s

- Brick/Masonry Walls
- Terracotta Roof
- No fencing with landscape



Reproduction 1990s

- Warm colour interruption of representing materials and style of area with terracotta roof



Current 2020s

- Simple use of robust materials e.g. rendered brick walls, feature timber panel
- Contemporary interruption of colours and existing character



Lalor Shops

- Earthy tones
- Perforated brown panels breaking up built form and creating variable street rhythm



Thomastown Shops

- Warm colour brick
- Signage branding conflicting loud bright colours



Rochdale Square

- Warm brick tones, yellow street furniture highlights
- Opportunity for upper storey development and to capitalise recent Council investment in streetscape



Station Street, Lalor

- Brick light
- Mix of reds and oranges
- Awnings present over footpath with variety in height, width and detailing



High Street

- Generally cool colours. E.g. Blues, yellows and greens
- Awnings vary in heights



Meridian- Medium Scale

- Blended earthy tones
- Contemporary design
- Screened car park with landscaping



Meridian – Large Scale

- Light earthy tones
- Contemporary design
- Screened car park with landscaping



7 Dalton Road

- Modern, mix of perforated metal of greys, oranges and metal sheeting
- Well landscaped



Temple Drive

- Earthy tones
- Older building stock sited directly on street
- Many hard surfaces with dominant asphalt, canopy trees is limited



Fowlers Heritage Building

- Cream tones
- Vertical detailing

16

FUTURE INDICATORS - DESIGN EXCELLENCE



Awnings protect semi-public and public realm on all active streets.



Street frontage treatments that form character that is respectful of area



Robust material that age well over time



Maximise and integrated landscaping with the built environment



Colours that respond to Thomastown and Lalor suburb character, history and context



Expressed entry points provide gateway to buildings



Interruption of pattern or use of European settlement materials



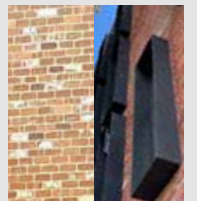
Avoid blank walls, texture that creates shadow that is attractive to touch



Achievable higher density with positive street address



Responsive built form and high quality materials overlooking public realm



Design features makes blank walls interesting

Future and existing built form indicators.

Thomastown and Lalor: Place Framework

PLACE SHAPING OVER TIME

This timeline provides a broad guide as to when place shaping opportunities could be implemented and responsibility.

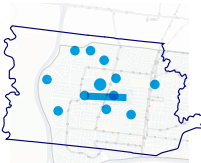
Many of these projects are identified as opportunities and some are in the early scoping phase. All opportunities will need time and community consultation to explore options in greater detail and may trigger refinement. This timeline is intended to be flexible to respond to changing circumstances and community priorities.

These opportunities will be assessed to be incorporated in the Integrated Planning Framework Strategy Action Plan over time.

*Please note implementation of proposed works will be subject to further detailed design, funding availability, consultation with stakeholders and the community. Any proposals on private property or vicinity of such, will be subject to property owner consent and relevant authority approval.*

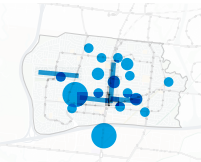
INDEPENDENT PROJECTS UNDER ONE VISION

Council aims to review and update every this document every **three-five years** to remain a place based and a community responsive document.



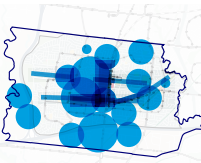
Short Term

In the short term, the Place Framework will begin unlocking, prioritising, budgeting, advocating for projects internally and externally and some design interventions that will aim to generate maximum place based outcomes but still be within the overall vision.



Medium Term

Thomastown and Lalor in the medium term will focus on a range of implementing design interventions that will connect and improve areas based council plans, budgets, available funding, grants, and political priorities. Advocacy and prioritisation of projects will continue to evolve.



Long Term

Major place shaping projects will transform Thomastown and Lalor significantly that will achieve future aspirations in the long term. This document aims to evolve over time to represent Thomastown and Lalor ultimate vision.

**THEMES – (MAY OVERLAP)**

- 1 Greener Spaces
- 2 Connected Places
- 3 Shared Local Culture
- 4 Vibrant Centres And Industries
- 5 Enhanced Character

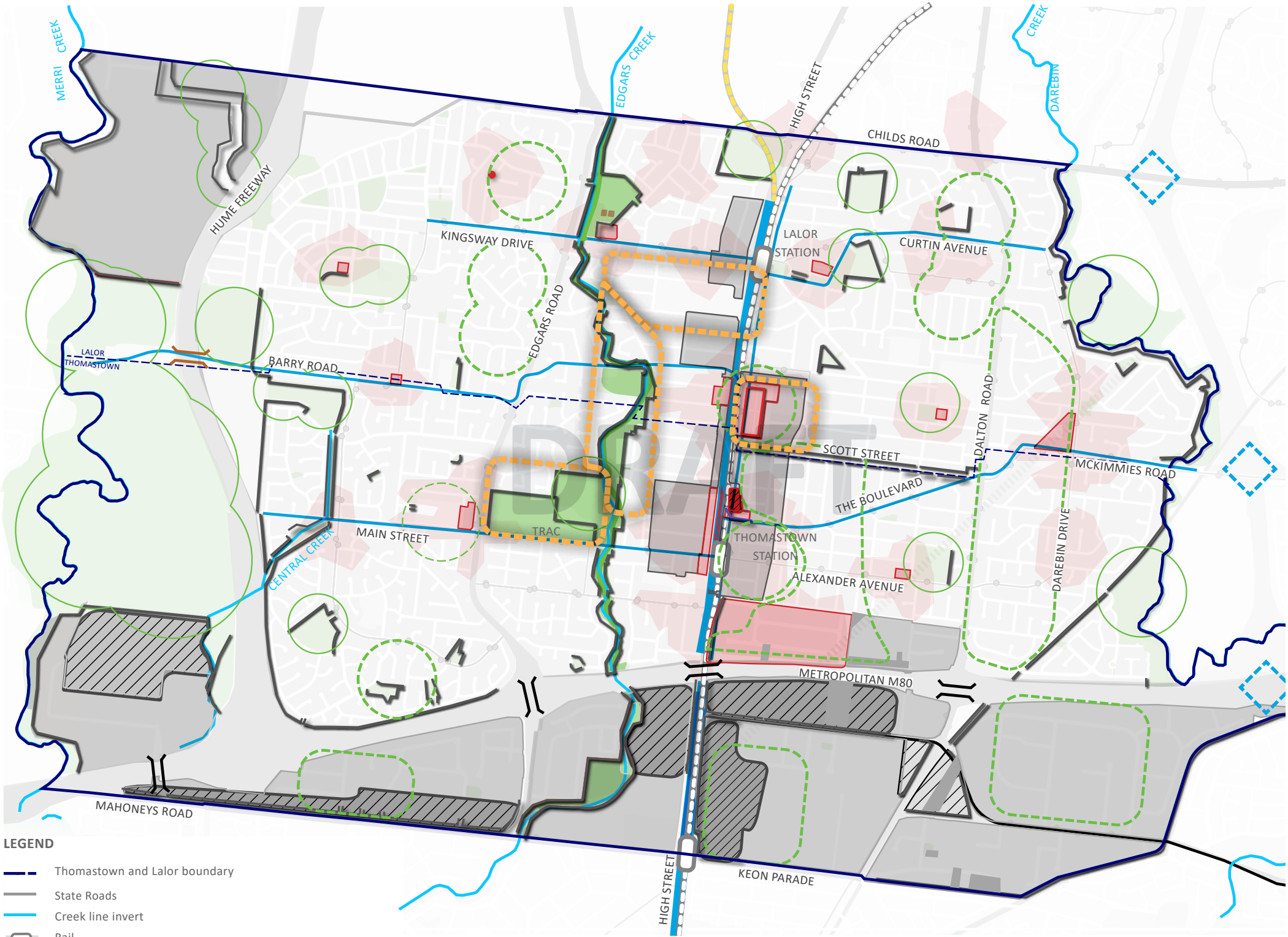
**KEY PARTNERS**

- W City of Whittlesea
- GOV Government
- Community
- \$ Traders and landowners
- Other organisations

OPPORTUNITIES		COMMUNITY PRIORITY	THEMES					KEY PARTNERS				
1	NATURALISED EDGARS CREEK AS A CENTRAL SPINE		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
2	FILL OPEN SPACE GAPS TO MAINTAIN AMENITY		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
3	GROW AND RE-WILD OPEN SPACE TO IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
4	MITIGATE FLOODING AND CLIMATE CHANGE		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
5	EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
6	HIGH STREET SPINE TRANSFORMATION		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
7	MAXIMISE PERMEABILITY ACROSS FREEWAYS		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
8	MAY STREET COMMUNITY PRECINCT		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
9	WESTGARTH TOWN COMMUNITY PRECINCT		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
10	MAIN STREET COMMUNITY PRECINCT		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
11	PETER LALOR COMMUNITY PRECINCT		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
12	REIMAGINED BUSINESS PLACES		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
13	TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION PROGRAM		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
14	INCLUSIVE AND DYNAMIC ECONOMY		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
15	TO PREPARE INDUSTRIAL AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
16	BUSINESS AS USUAL – DESIGN EXCELLENCE		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	
17	IDENTIFY CONTROLS OR GUIDELINES TO INFLUENCE HIGHER QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES		1	2	3	4	5	W	GOV		\$	



POTENTIAL PLACE SHAPING OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY PLAN



- LEGEND**
- Thomastown and Lalor boundary
  - State Roads
  - Creek line invert
  - Rail
  - Wollert rail extension
  - Bridge
  - Pedestrian bridge

**PLACE MAKING OPPORTUNITIES**

**PRECINCT PLACE MAKING**

- NATURALISED EDGARS CREEK AS A CENTRAL SPINE
- FILLING THE GAP TO MAINTAIN AMENITY
- HIGH STREET SPINE TRANSFORMATION
- EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS
- MAXIMISE PERMEABILITY ACROSS FREEWAYS
- COMMUNITY HUBS
  - MAY STREET
  - WESTGARTHTOWN
  - MAIN STREET
  - PETER LALOR
- TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION PROGRAM
  - PREPARE INDUSTRIAL GUIDELINES
  - IDENTIFY CONTROLS OR GUIDELINES TO INFLUENCE HIGHER QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

**ONGOING/BUSINESS AS USUAL**

- GROW AND RE-WILD OPEN SPACE TO IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY
- MITIGATING FLOODING AND CLIMATE CHANGE
- INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT
- DESIGN EXCELLENCE

NOTE: OPPORTUNITIES MAY OVERLAP.

- KEY THEMES**
- Greener Spaces
  - Connected Places
  - Shared Local Culture
  - Vibrant Centres And Industries
  - Enhanced Character

Place shaping opportunities






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## Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework Engagement Summary

January 2023



### Introduction

Council is planning to improve Thomastown and Lalor by tailoring Council's vision 'Whittlesea 2040 a place for all' to suit the local community. To help us achieve this, a Thomastown and Lalor Framework is being developed that identifies a place responsive vision, themes, outcomes and place shaping recommendations. A draft Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework was presented to the community that aims to:

- Translate the Whittlesea 2040 vision to Thomastown and Lalor by identifying local challenges and opportunities.
- Establish a local, place responsive vision that connects to community aspirations.
- Filling the gap in strategic direction for these established areas.
- Articulating a clear Council direction for place shaping and investment priorities.
- Ensure Council planning and delivery considers the unique qualities of Thomastown and Lalor to enhance the area over time.

The Framework aims to:

- Illustrates sites and locations that have clear opportunities for improvement.
- Provides place specific guidelines to improve Thomastown and Lalor.
- Incrementally deliver the local vision over time.
- Incorporates a high-level implementation plan which identifies key partners and broad timeframes for priority place shaping recommendations.

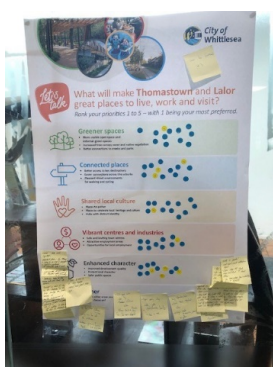
This purpose of the recent community engagement was to inform the local community of the project and its background and encourage them to share their feedback. A space was provided for them to prioritise which of the opportunities and themes are important to them. The feedback will inform future prioritisation of projects within the Thomastown and Lalor area.

## How we engaged you

The third and last phase of the community engagement ran from 5 November to 4 December 2022. The [project engage page](#) provide the community with relevant information and provided opportunities for online engagement including survey tools.

During the engagement period, the project team held community-based in person engagement sessions at key locations across Thomastown and Lalor, including:

- Lalor Library on 7 November from 10am to 12pm.
- Lalor shops on 16 November from 10am to 12pm.
- Thomastown shops on 17 November from 2:30pm to 5pm.
- Promisestown Picnic – TRACC (Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre) on 12 November from 1pm to 5pm.
- Thomastown Library on 24 November from 10am to 12pm.



*In person engagement activity.*



*In person engagement activity.*



*Thomastown Shops*



*Promisestown*



*Promisestown, rock painting*



*Lalor Shops*

*Photos: In person engagement activities*



The community engagement was promoted through a range of tactics including:

- Posters displayed in community facilities including TRACC, libraries and Community Activity Centres
- Social media posts – across Council’s channels we shared 6 posts reaching 11,591 people.
- Targeted letterbox drops – 1,000 households across Thomastown and Lalor received a letter.
- Engage Whittlesea automated email - Subscribers to the Engage Whittlesea platform were notified via email of the new project page (total 695 subscribers). Of these, 388 recipients read the email with 54 clicking through the site.
- Large corflute signage at building entries when engagement sessions were being held.

The project team directly contacted key stakeholders to encourage participation in the engagement, including:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Thomastown Precinct Activation Group            | • Department of Environment                  |
| • Youth Advisory Committee                        | • Water Land Planning                        |
| • Business Advisory Panel                         | • Level Crossing Removal Projects            |
| • The Wurundjeri Reconciliation Group             | • Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions  |
| • Whittlesea Disability Network                   | • Heritage Victoria                          |
| • Bub Wiliam Aboriginal Child Serves (Thomastown) | • Darebin Council                            |
| • First Peoples Health (Lalor)                    | • APA Group (Australia)                      |
| • Victorian Aboriginal Health services (Epping)   | • Member for Thomastown Bronwyn Halfpenny MP |
| • Dardi Munnrow.                                  | • Local schools                              |

## Participation

A total of 367 people participated in engagement activities. The Thomastown and Lalor Draft Place Framework online engage page attracted 439 visitors during the engagement period, with 43 community members opting to follow the project page to remain abreast of developments.

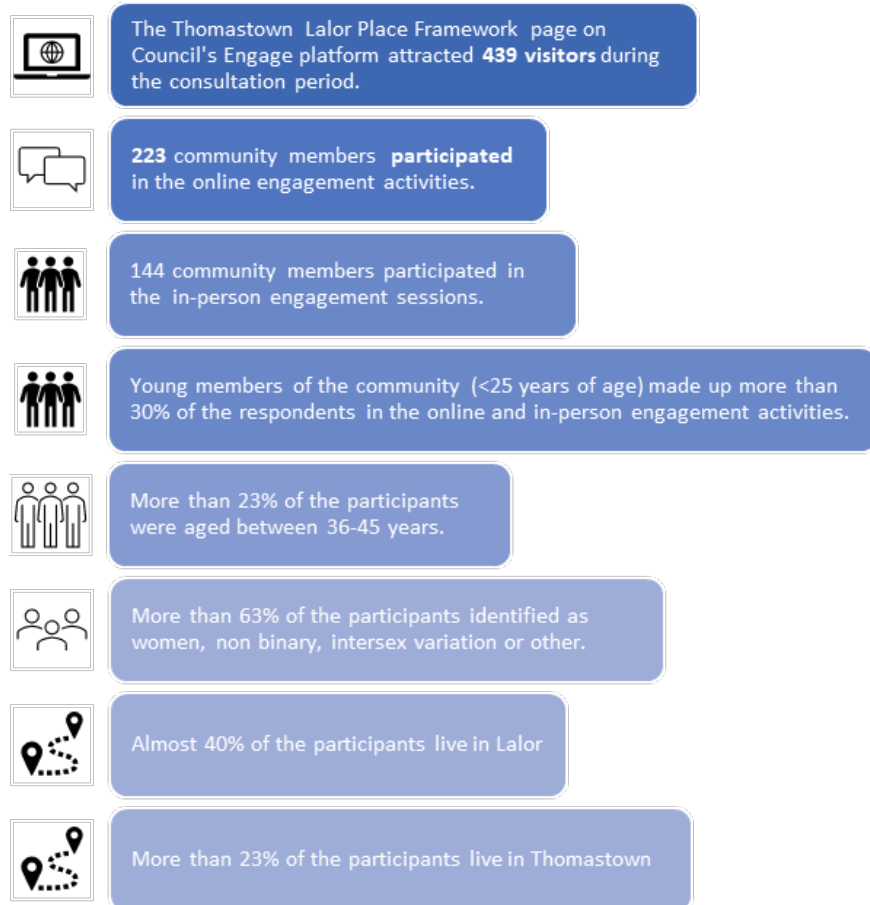
The engagement activities were culturally inclusive with bilingual staff available at events to facilitate conversation in commonly spoken languages including Greek, Macedonian, Arabic and Hindi. Council Officers attended community events and locations that encourage diversity and inclusion including:

- Promisestown Picnic – an event that encourages the LGBTQI+ community and allies of the community to participate
- Direct consultation with Macedonian Seniors Club at the Thomastown Library
- Youth Participation at the local libraries and through the Youth Advisory Committee
- Direct consultation with the mother's group that meets at Thomastown Library. This group is made up of mothers from a range of cultural backgrounds.

Of the 99 respondents to the online survey, 56.57% live in either Thomastown or Lalor. More than half (64%) of respondents indicated that they visit Thomastown and/or Lalor daily, while 25% visit weekly.

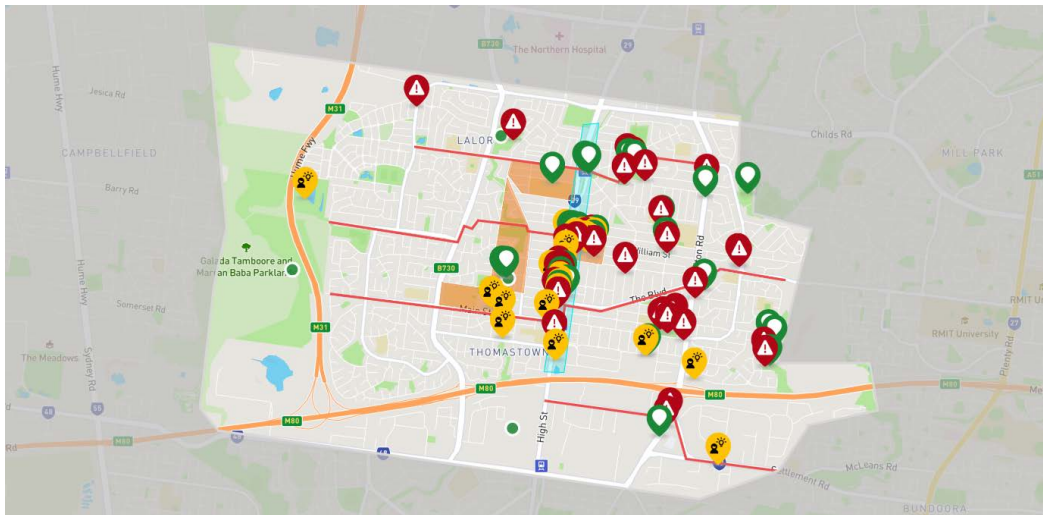
The main reasons for their visits were shopping (33%) visiting friends/family (27%) or participating in sports or recreational activities in the area (16%).

Other key participation figures can be seen in the infographic below.



### Social pinpoint map

A total of 26 respondents, who live, work or visit Thomastown and Lalor provided 92 contributions to the project interactive map. There were 29 comments on missed opportunities, 37 comments on priority sites and 25 other comments recorded on the social pinpoint map. These contributions have been captured in the opportunities and challenges section.



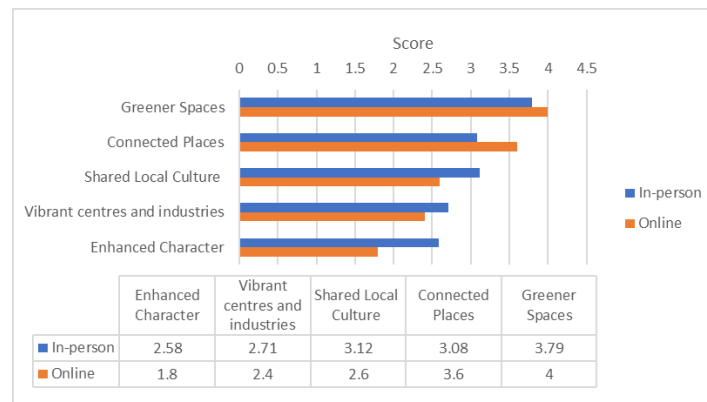
### Drop pin engagement mapping



## What we heard

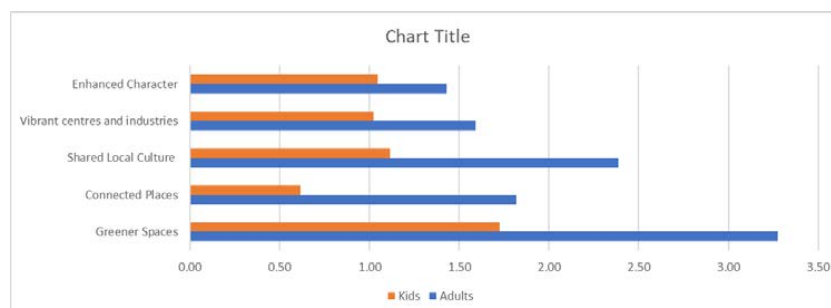
There was overwhelming support for the overall draft Thomastown and Lalor Place framework with 88% of online respondents indicating their support. When asked if they agreed with the vision included in the framework 98 out of 99 respondents indicated agreement. The sole contributor that did not agree suggested that the vision did not meet the needs of youths.

Feedback received online and in-person was generally aligned. The graphs below show the feedback received, broken down to in-person and online.



Graph 1: Online data has been converted to a scale of 1 to 4 from a scale of 1-20 from the fund it page.

Feedback related to preference prioritisation was similar among adults and children as illustrated in the below graph.



Graph 2: Children prioritisation preference is similar adults.

'Greener Spaces' was ranked the most important theme and Naturalise Edgars Creek as the most important opportunity overall for both the online and in-person engagement.

- Almost 70% (67%) of respondents visit Edgar's Creek with 24% visiting the Creek daily and 43% visiting the Creek up to 12 times a year.
- While 48% of the respondents generally liked Edgars Creek, 60% see benefit in improving the Creek.

'Connected places' was ranked the second most important theme online and third in-person.

- 'Accessibility and permeability across High Street' opportunity with pleasant streets environments for walking and cycling was the highest priority on the survey.

- Almost 60% (58%) of the respondents indicated they have low to very low access to public transport and 30% of the respondents noted that they believe their perception of safety for walking and cycling was not safe.
- Kingsway Drive to Curtin Avenue was voted most suitable for pedestrians and cyclists (85%-75%). Settlement Road was identified as the most unsuitable for pedestrians and cyclists at (50%-56%), followed by Main Street to McKimmies Road (31%-49%) and Barry Road (30%-34%).

‘Shared Local Culture’ ranked the third most important theme online and second for the in-person engagement.

- Almost 50% of respondents (46%) indicated that the Main Street Precinct was within walkable distance from their home at.
- All precincts scored less than 23% when respondents were asked if there were places for youths.
- More than 90% of the respondents would like to see more community events within their precincts, and 94% of the respondents would agree to temporary road closures to support these activities.
- May Street Precinct at 71% was preferred precinct to be activated, with respondents wanting to see improve planting (43%) and improved spaces for young people (41%) within the precincts.

‘Vibrant Centres’ ranked the fourth most important theme overall.

- Almost 50% of respondents (46%) would like to have a job within walking distance of their homes.
- Almost 50% (47%) thought that Thomastown and Lalor town centres and industry areas should undergo significant strategic level change.
- Majority of the respondents said they would like more change in the town centres including increase planting and tree canopy significantly, programming of town centres with food trucks etc, improve quality of streetscapes, increase activity, increase population density, improve eateries and coffee shops opportunities, increase pocket parks and safe spaces for people to stop and linger.



*Word Cloud 1: Most places visited in Town Centres in Thomastown and Lalor by the respondents. Larger the word greater the number of respondents.*

‘Enhanced Character’ was the least prioritised theme overall.

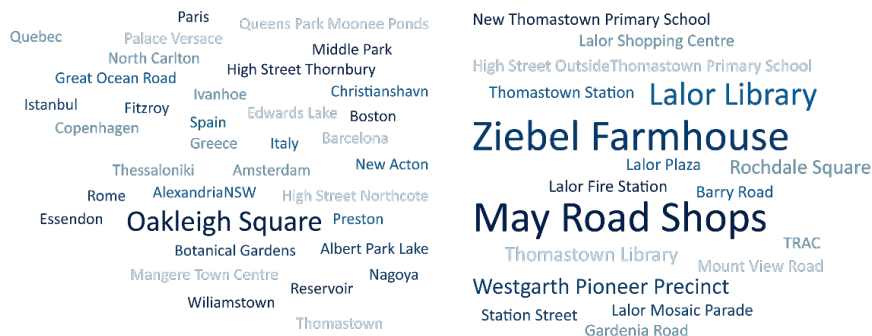


- Online survey received 45 responses which supports Activated Public Spaces overwhelmingly at 96%. More than 66% of the respondents thought that new development in Thomastown and Lalor had appropriate style and scale. Respondents had mixed comments around future development of Thomastown and Lalor in terms of massing, although all agree that the quality of the building with attractive robust materials, improved landscaping and interaction to the street is important. Refer to comments below.

*"I want more development at higher densities to be allowed. More development of commercial and residential uses will benefit our local community. I don't want any new limitations on development or "style" ... I simply want to encourage more to be built in our area. Housing is too expensive, and more homes being built is the only solution. I also want more variety of local shops and businesses accessible in walking distance of my home near Dalton Rd."* - Community Member

*"A lot of developers use low quality materials entrenching the perception of a low socio-economic neighbourhood. Also, landscape plans for new multi-unit developments should ensure low-maintenance gardens. Most landscaped areas in new units are not maintained and become overgrown weed gardens that detract from the whole streetscape. More should be done at the planning assessment stage as well as enforcing landscape plans post-development"* - Community Member

*"...no big buildings please"* - Community Member



Word Cloud 2 and 3: Favourite places. (Left = World – Right = Local). Larger the word greater the number of respondents.

### Feedback from other targeted stakeholders

The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) prioritised the 'Connected Places' and then 'Greener Spaces' themes. They suggested improved public transport timetabling and rerouting, access, the general area to be greener and for a place to 'hangout' nearby shopping centres, upgrading trails and open spaces for recreational activities.

The Thomastown Precinct Activation Group (TPAG) were supportive and provided general comments for each theme to strengthen the existing report and the vision statement. The key points they raised are:

- 'Greener spaces' opportunities were all supported with an emphasis to 'naturalise Edgars Creek as a Central Spine' with more vegetation to reduce heat island affect
- The 'Connected Places' opportunities should focus on 'East-West' and 'High Street' transformations to be safer, improved public transport and to remove barriers to improve experience and universal access.
- All 'Shared Local Culture' opportunities to be equally weighted and that they should be authentic and organic improvements, such as to their own character, programmed differently, land uses want and needs of their hubs as each of the hubs is quite different.
- the 'Vibrant Centres and Industries' priorities should be improved with programs, campaigns for businesses to take ownership of their immediate streets and neighbourhoods to improve quality, keep clean and support beautification.
- the 'Enhance Character' priorities were supported with emphasis for business to be supported to do their own initiatives e.g., support for business to go green and beautification.
- The 'Vision Statement' wording is too static and needs to go back to place. Final statement needs to unpack safety, mix of physical and cultural connections, improve history context and specific on building relationships.

APA VTS Group commented that utility infrastructure should be included within the document for future development and their guidelines to be considered for any future works. They claim any future development to the proximity of the pipeline easement should seek APA VTS input.




DEWLP - '20min neighbourhoods, Places and Precincts' team provided detailed comments around the structure of the document and implementation of actions. DEWLP emphasises adjusting wording around housing density and diversity through intensification to support 20min neighbourhoods with tangible targets. Findings of the 20minute Neighbourhoods project which is running concurrently with this project will inform these concepts.



## Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities and challenges identified through the community engagement have been grouped and sorted to find consistencies in responses. The comments generally align with the drivers of the place framework and echo the need for the identified opportunities. Comments should be attributed to any future actions.




### Greener Spaces

Focus Area	Comments
 Easily accessible parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future Edgar's Creek design needs to incorporate; paved pedestrian pathways and lighting, more picnic spaces and BBQ facilities along the creek. Naturalization and maintenance of the creek area and its facilities should be prioritized.</li> <li>• Seating and public toilets should be located at frequent intervals as it is an area frequented by families and elderly people.</li> </ul>
 Responsive public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate more outdoor activities in open spaces – especially youth-oriented activities like skateparks, netball and basketball courts.</li> <li>• Maintenance of parks and open spaces should be undertaken more frequently.</li> <li>• Reduce overgrown vegetation, littering (broken glass) and lack of adequate lighting create potentially unsafe environments for the community and encourage instances of antisocial behaviour. In particular the area around the library is seen as unsafe for holding library and community events.</li> <li>• The lack of adequate lighting, seating areas, public toilets, picnic areas and pedestrian paths along Edgar's Creek make it difficult for families and elderly people to enjoy the creek.</li> </ul>
 Cooler, greener and bio-diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and encourage large canopy trees on nature strips, parks, and playground. The lack of large canopy trees makes it difficult for pedestrians and children to walk on the footpath or play at the park during summertime due to excessive heat.</li> <li>• Respondents mentioned that they would like to see more open spaces in Thomastown and Lalor with facilities like sports grounds, BBQs, well-maintained community gardens.</li> <li>• Employees at Lalor library highlighted the lack of open spaces around the library prevents them from organising outdoor events.</li> </ul>
<b>Naturalise Edgars Creek</b> opportunity was unanimously agreed upon by the community as the highest priority under the Green Spaces Theme.	

*"I like areas of the city of Melbourne where there are lots of trees, lots of areas for sitting down, a wide variety of retailers and food outlets, and lots of artwork. Shade cover from trees is always a good first step" - Community Member*

Table 1: Opportunities and Challenges for Greener Spaces

**Connected places**




Focus Area	Comments
 <p>High Street as a place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage safe and continuous pedestrian and cycling connections along High Street.</li> <li>• Encourage level crossing removals to improve mobility in the east-west directions.</li> <li>• More parking spaces are required at May St for retail employees.</li> <li>• More shops along both sides of High Street</li> <li>• Lack of diversity in the services provided and few options for indoor activities in the shopping precinct. Residents believe that this prevents it from being a key destination.</li> <li>• High Street to evolve into a vibrant retail centre which is accessible through active modes of transport.</li> <li>• Public transport connections through the suburbs also need be reconsidered.</li> </ul>
 <p>Enhanced connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overgrown and thick vegetation and lack of passive surveillance between Main St and Spring St, make the area potentially unsafe.</li> <li>• Reckless driving and poor lighting make it unsafe to for pedestrians at night between German Ln and Main St.</li> <li>• Public transport connects are infrequent across suburbs and to the city and surrounding destinations.</li> </ul>
 <p>Regional trails</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of safe pedestrian crossings near parks, playgrounds and childcare centres pose a threat to the safety of young people.</li> <li>• Inadequate signages for pedestrian crossings especially near parks, playgrounds and childcare centres and libraries (Lalor Library) impact the safety of children and pedestrians.</li> <li>• High Street lacks cycling connections and pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>• Lack of continuity in cycling tracks and pedestrian pathways, lighting and natural shade was another issue brought up respondents that impacted their use of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accessibility and permeability along High Street</b> opportunity was unanimously agreed upon by the community as the highest priority under the Connected Places Theme.</p>	

*“Oakleigh square is a great set up for an urban square idea. If you're looking for a strip look at how high street Northcote and Thornbury has evolved on High Street. There is multiple restaurant bars etc, it is perfect.” - Community Member*

Table 2: Opportunities and Challenges for Connected Spaces






**Shared Local Culture**

Focus Area	Comments
 Welcoming precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved infrastructure – seating, technological capability, lighting and Wi-Fi access create informal gathering spaces along retail strips.</li> <li>Lack of accessibility between facilities</li> <li>Improved walkability and cycling to the facilities</li> <li>Unsafe pedestrian crossings</li> <li>More information related to the precinct on display and signage along the way, e.g., historical info in Westgarth precinct. May Rd, better seating and gathering spaces with info about history of people who live in the area as well as services and signage in other languages.</li> </ul>
 Culturally celebrated civic spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage festivals and allow for more fresh food and farmer's markets and informal performance arts.</li> <li>Encourage more advocacy events</li> </ul>
 Informal spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate more spaces for youth to gather – indoor spaces as well as outdoor activity spaces. Outdoor activities such as skateparks, swimming, mental health services, career counselling, libraries spaces for tutoring are appreciated by young members of the community.</li> <li>Coffee and café tables and shelter through walkway - traders keep clean</li> <li>Urban edible gardens and parks and open spaces landscaped with native vegetation provide informal places for people to gather and socialize.</li> </ul>
<b>May Street Precinct</b> opportunity was unanimously agreed upon by the community as the highest priority under the Shared Local Culture.	

*“There is very little to do in Thomastown in the evening. I would love to see a venue where local musicians could put on shows in the day and evening. Ragtime Tavern in Reservoir is a good example of this. It is used by musicians to try out their material. Has a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. We have lots of musicians in Whittlesea, including from diverse language communities.” -Community Member*

Table 3: Opportunities and Challenges for Shared Local Culture

**Vibrant centres and industries**

Focus Area	Comments – online and offline
 <p>Vibrant, viable and attractive town centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the streetscapes within town centres to include more trees, shaded walkways and street furniture. Utilise planning controls to ensure a good mix of retail, cafés and restaurants</li> <li>• Ensure shopfronts are well maintained and vacant shops are reutilised or repurposed.</li> <li>• Approximately half of the community support significant master planning closely followed by medium changes such as revitalisation as preferences</li> </ul>
 <p>Active retail spine and movement corridor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve walkability by adding safe pedestrian crossings and speed bumps to slow down traffic around town centres.</li> <li>• Encourage traders to stay open late to make the area vibrant and increase passive surveillance at night.</li> <li>• Encourage high density development near activity centres to increase availability of local jobs. It would also allow a greater number of people to access the activity centres by active modes of transport.</li> </ul>
 <p>Inclusive and dynamic local economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for more family friendly establishments in town centres.</li> <li>• Encourage local artisanal industries that collaborate with the community through workshops or factory outlets. This would aid in bringing the community members to the industrial areas and integrate it better with the rest of Thomastown and Lalor</li> <li>• Incorporate smaller pocket parks and squares along with smaller shopping strips, within the industrial areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reimagined Business Places</b> was unanimously agreed upon by the community as the highest priority under Vibrant Centres and Industries.</p>	




*“Family friendly nightlife, live music, art exhibitions, art and craft groups, community galleries, somewhere locals can offer their handmade items for sale.” -Community Member*

*“Happy to have major change, and major developments to grow our activity centres. The more activity the better.” -Community Member*

Table 4: Opportunities and Challenges for Vibrant Town Centres



**Enhanced character**

Focus Area	Comments
 Public space interface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage high density and high-rise buildings in town centres and employment areas as it makes locality feel comfortable and safe. It is more inviting and increases chances of socialisation and active living.</li> <li>• Encourage use of low maintenance landscaping to prevent the area from overgrown vegetation that detract from the character of the streetscape.</li> </ul>
 Urban renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid cyclone fencing as it makes the neighbourhood look unappealing and tends to collect rubbish.</li> <li>• Avoid or rework street parking on narrow streets especially where there are units or compact houses as it makes the roads congested for driving.</li> </ul>
 Quality and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate flooding measures in newer developments as well as use materials and ground cover that lower the impact of urban heat island effect.</li> <li>• Encourage good quality developments with visual appeal that fits the character of the neighbourhood.</li> <li>• Avoid approving projects with cheap materials that are likely to date quickly.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of recycled building materials.</li> </ul>
<b>Design Excellence and Identify controls or guidelines to influence higher quality development outcomes</b> are equal opportunities that were agreed upon by the community that equally share highest priority under the Enhanced Character.	

*“Thomastown and Lalor have a working class, industrial heritage and new builds should provide a contemporary interpretation of this in design and materials used, such as in the 2020 example under your residential timeline below. It should NOT be seen as an 'interruption' but interpretation if you want to attract younger people to live and work in the area.” - Community Member*

Table 5: Opportunities and Challenges for Enhanced Character

## Next steps

Thank you to everyone that completed the survey, provided detailed feedback, dropped a pin and participated in the community engagement.

Feedback gathered from the community is being used to develop the final document and will be incorporated into the decision-making process. While we are not able to accommodate everyone's comments, the project team will provide solutions to the issues raised and balance them with the requirements of Council.

The Final Place Framework will be presented to Council for endorsement in the next few months.

### 5.5.2 Proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for Affordable Housing

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director Planning & Development
<b>Author</b>	William Fairweather, Social Planning & Policy Officer
<b>In Attendance</b>	George Saisanas, Manager Strategic Futures Liam Wilkinson, Unit Manager Strategic Planning William Fairweather, Social Planning & Policy Officer

#### Attachments

1. Context Map -1F Ashline Street, Wollert [5.5.2.1 - 1 page]

#### Purpose

This report provides Council with an overview of the community engagement processes and outcomes relating to the proposal to lease of land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of affordable housing.

It recommends that Council address community concern by amending the proposal and proceed with leasing the land and commences the Expression Of Interest (EOI) process to identify a suitable Registered Community Housing Organisation (CHO) to manage and develop affordable housing on the site.

#### Brief Overview

Data from the 2021 census highlighted the unmet demand (more than 3000 households) for affordable housing in the City of Whittlesea. We know the recent pattern of consecutive interest rate rises, inflation and escalating cost of living is creating even greater demand for affordable housing and the shortfall is having devastating socio-economic impacts on local families and households with rising rates of homelessness. All tiers of government need to work in partnership, along with the community housing sector to create solutions to this complex issue.

In line with the priorities our community expressed in the development of our Whittlesea 2040 community vision A Place For All, Council is committed to facilitating new social and affordable housing across the whole municipality.

On 6 September 2021, Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert to a community housing partner, for the purpose of affordable housing and commence a process of community engagement on the proposal.

Council extensively promoted the consultation and provided a range of opportunities to provide feedback between September 2021 and July 2022, including an online survey, online information session, focus groups and community drop-in session.

Feedback from the community engagement indicated that majority of participants did not support the proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of affordable housing citing concerns about safety, amenity and impact to property value.

This report takes into consideration both local community feedback and the broader need for affordable housing in the municipality. This report proposes an approach that addresses community concern while still commencing an EOI process to lease the land to a community housing organisation for the purpose of providing affordable housing on the site.

### **Recommendation**

#### **THAT Council:**

- 1. Note the outcomes of the community engagement detailed in this report in Attachment 1.**
- 2. Commence an Expression of Interest process to identify a registered housing organisation to deliver affordable housing on the site.**
- 3. Include the following selection criteria requirements in the Expression of Interest based on community feedback received as part of the engagement process:**
  - a) ensure a high-quality design that is integrated with, and responds to, the surrounding neighbourhood character**
  - b) the development does not exceed two story's and be single detached, duplex and townhouse style only**
  - c) the development uses similar design features and finishes present in the surrounding dwellings within the precinct**
  - d) establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing**
  - e) provision of a flexible community space on the site that would be managed by Council and integrated with the adjacent Community Activity Centre for the benefit of the local community**
  - f) dwellings will be preferentially allocated to local residents or people with local connections in one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, key workers and people with disabilities.**
- 4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to select the preferred registered housing organisation from the Expression of Interest process to deliver affordable housing on the site in accordance with the selection criteria which includes the requirements outlined in Recommendation No. 3 of this report.**
- 5. Having complied with Section 115(4) of the Local Government Act 2020, enters into a lease agreement up to a maximum of 50 years with a registered housing organisation identified through an Expression of Interest process (at a nominal rental) in relation to land at 1F Ashline Street Wollert, for the provision of affordable housing.**



6. **Requires the lease agreement to include the criteria outlined in Recommendation No. 3 above as enforceable conditions.**
7. **Conduct further community engagement in partnership with the successful registered housing organisation on the design of the affordable housing development and community space should Council proceed to lease the land.**
8. **Write to all participants in the engagement process to advise them of Council's decision and next steps in the process.**

## Key Information

### Background

At its Council meeting on 6 September 2021, Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert to a community housing organisation for the purpose of delivering affordable housing and to commence a process of community engagement on the proposal. The site at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert was assessed as being suitable for affordable housing based on its proximity to services and development potential.

The site is a 5000 square metre vacant block of General Residential Zoned land located at the intersection of De Rossi Boulevard and Highpark Drive in Wollert. The site is surrounded by small scale residential development and located opposite Wollert Primary School. There is no significant vegetation on the site. Utilising this site for affordable housing would help address the significant shortfall of this type of housing in the municipality.

The site was vested to Council as part of a development contribution for 'community purposes' and was initially envisioned as the location for the community activity centre. However, Council determined to deliver the community activity centre on the adjacent Wollert Primary School site at its Council Meeting on 17 November 2020. The decision to deliver the community activity centre on the school site was made on the basis that it would provide for a larger facility capable of accommodating a greater range of services directly integrated with the school, whilst still maintaining the facility within the immediate area. Delivering the community activity centre on this site allowed for a larger foyer space, additional kinder rooms and consulting suites to provide additional services and activities for the community. The facility is also to accommodate a new library hub in the foyer including bookshelves, adult and children's seating, self-checkout kiosk and returns area, with collection items available in a variety of languages. The hub is expected to be delivered by the end of 2023 and responds to community feedback including in response to consultation undertaken on this project.

Since moving the community centre adjacent to Wollert Primary School, the subject site land has therefore become available for an alternative community use, such as affordable housing. The overarching strategic planning document for the area, the Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan (May 2008) identified the need for affordable housing in the area.

The plan had also earmarked the potential outcome to 'co-locate the community activity centre with schools.

Following the Council decision at its meeting on 6 September 2021, the first phase of community engagement on the project commenced and consisted of an online survey and an online information session. Face-to-face consultation was limited due to the pandemic, so it was determined to extend the community engagement period to accommodate in-person engagement and to gain a deeper understanding of community perspectives on the proposal. This subsequent stage of engagement consisted of three focus groups and a community drop-in session.

The following timeline summarises the key dates in the process to date:

### Timeline

- **17 November 2020** - Council resolved to deliver the community centre on the Wollert Primary School site.
- **December 2020 and March 2021** - Notice given of the decision to deliver the community centre on the school site
- **July 2021** - Consultation with the local community on the naming of the community centre.
- **6 September 2021** - Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street for affordable housing and commence community engagement.
- **September 2021** - Stage 1 Community Engagement
- **6 December 2021** – Council resolved to extend the engagement
- **May - July 2022** -Stage 2 Community Engagement

### Strategic Context

The City of Whittlesea has a commitment to address the affordable housing needs of our communities. Housing is a fundamental human need that contributes to individual and community safety and wellbeing. Affordable housing for very-low-, low- and moderate-income households is essential community infrastructure, important to ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in their local communities.

All levels of Government are responsible for ensuring our communities have access to appropriate and affordable housing. Each level of Government must work in partnership, along with the community housing sector and industry, to encourage and facilitate affordable housing outcomes that meet the diverse needs of our current and future population.

While the Federal Government plays an important role in funding projects and programs, State Governments have primary responsibility for managing and constructing social and affordable housing in Australia. Homes Victoria sits within the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and manages Victoria's social and affordable housing system. This includes public housing, community housing, crisis accommodation, transitional accommodation and affordable housing, as well as having the powers to purchase, develop, lease and sell property.

In 2020 the State Government launched the \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build, which will construct 12,000 new social and affordable homes in Victoria. The investment, delivered throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria, will boost total social housing supply by 10%. Some of this funding is earmarked for projects to support people living in the City of Whittlesea.

#### *The City of Whittlesea's role*

Local councils play an important part in facilitating the delivery of high-quality affordable housing developments for households on very low to moderate incomes. Local governments have many roles and legislated responsibilities that influence the provision of affordable housing. These roles vary across the local governments in the method and level of intervention taken to facilitate affordable housing. This can be done through land-use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning, economic planning and development, community engagement and advocacy. Council also plays a role in partnership, brokerage and facilitation to bring stakeholders together on specific projects.

Specifically, to deliver more affordable housing the City of Whittlesea:

- Advocates to the Victorian and Federal Government and relevant stakeholders to increase the supply of affordable housing in the municipality
- Facilitates partnerships to improve provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the community, particularly cohorts at-risk of housing insecurity
- Negotiates affordable housing agreements as part of rezonings, and planning permit applications to increase supply and diversity of affordable housing at appropriate opportunities.

The City of Whittlesea's commitment to affordable housing is articulated in several strategic documents and plans. The City of Whittlesea's Social and Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy expresses Council's role in influencing and encouraging the provision of affordable housing, including targets of 5% social housing and 10% affordable housing in the planning of any established or greenfield housing development. These targets are also included in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.



Council is committed to facilitating new social and affordable housing across the whole municipality including in new estate developments in greenfield areas as well as in established suburbs and regeneration sites.

Moreover, the local community have reaffirmed the need for Council to play a role in delivering affordable housing through the development of the Whittlesea 2040 Community Vision A Place for all. Findings from the Whittlesea 2040 consultation showed that the community want better access to affordable, quality homes for diverse households. Responses highlighted the need for a variety of housing options, including cheaper and high-quality housing and having more social housing options.

A summary of documents and corresponding actions or targets guiding the affordable housing development at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert is shown in the table below:

<b>Document</b>	<b>Action/Targets</b>
Whittlesea 2040	Action 2.3 Housing for diverse needs This means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and varied housing options</li> <li>- Housing that is affordable and accessible</li> </ul>
Community Plan 2021 - 2025	Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods Includes the goal to deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality.
Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan	1.4 Objectives of the Epping North East Local Structure plan includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To facilitate and promote provision of affordable housing.</li> </ul>
Whittlesea Planning Scheme	Section 16.01-2L: Achieving the inclusion of 5 per cent social housing and 10 per cent affordable housing (that is not social housing) in the structure planning of any established or new greenfield housing development.
Social and affordable housing - Policy and Strategy 2012-2016	Policy Goal: To encourage and facilitate the growth of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for very low, low and moderate income households across the municipality.

### *Affordable housing demand*

Modelling based on the 2021 census show 3,606 households have an unmet need for affordable housing in the municipality. This is an increase of 412 households from models based on the 2016 census year<sup>1</sup>.

At the 2021 census, 854 people were experiencing homelessness in the municipality. This was an increase of 35% from 2016 when 630 people in Whittlesea experiencing homelessness<sup>2</sup>. Also in 2020-21, 1,876 people accessed specialist homelessness services in the municipality<sup>3</sup>.

Within the municipality, 1,138 households, or 1.3%, rent social housing. This is comprised of 658 public housing dwellings; 410 community housing dwellings and 70 crisis or transitional housing dwellings<sup>4</sup>. This is lower than the average for greater Melbourne (2.3% of all households) and a relative decrease from 2016 when 2.6% of households within the City of Whittlesea rented social housing<sup>5</sup>.

The number of private rentals affordable to people on Centrelink incomes is decreasing. In the December 2022 quarter, just 12.9% of rentals were affordable to people on Centrelink; a decrease from 13.3% in the previous quarter<sup>6</sup>.

This data shows that demand for social and affordable housing is outstripping supply. This gap is likely to grow as increased interest rates – ten consecutive raises since May 2022 and growing inflation place further pressure on household budgets and the ability to make mortgage repayments or pay rent. Recent newspaper articles suggest many renters and mortgagees are struggling with increased housing costs that are yet to be captured in any published data<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [Housing Stress & Need | City of Whittlesea | housing monitor \(id.com.au\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Estimating Homelessness: Census, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Specialist homelessness services annual report 2021–22, About - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Data supplied by Homes Victoria, 2023

<sup>5</sup> [Housing tenure | City of Whittlesea | Community profile \(id.com.au\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Department of Families Fairness and Housing Victoria | Rental report \(dffh.vic.gov.au\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Melbourne property: Suburbs where homeowners can't make their mortgage repayments ahead of likely February interest rate rise as interest rates rise \(theage.com.au\)](#), [Australia's renters face 'staggering' increases – with more to come | Renting | The Guardian](#)

### *Recent successes*

Recently, Council has advocated to the State Government for new social and affordable housing in the municipality through the Big Housing Build. To date, the Big Housing Build has invested \$134 million in the City of Whittlesea for 83 completed new homes and another 2227 currently under construction in established and growth area suburbs right across the municipality, including Wollert.

In addition to the State Government delivered housing, Council has negotiated outcomes with developers for the provision of social and affordable housing. For example, Council successfully negotiated to deliver approximately 300 affordable housing dwellings on privately-owned land as part of the New Epping development. Tenants are already moving into the first phase of development, comprising 151 affordable dwellings owned and managed by community housing organisation, Haven Home Safe. Anecdotally, this project attracted significant interest from people working in the area looking for high quality affordable housing.

This project continues Council's work facilitating new social and affordable housing as despite these recent successes, there is still a major need for more affordable housing within the City of Whittlesea.

### *Definitions*

There are several terms used to describe the different types of social and affordable housings. Confusing these can lead to misunderstanding the type of housing being delivered by a project. The definitions are included below.

- **Affordable Housing** is defined in the Planning and Environment Act 1987. It is housing (rent or purchase) that is appropriate for households on very low to moderate incomes. It includes social housing, affordable rental and affordable homeownership.
- **Social housing** is provided to households who are on the Victorian Housing Register. Rents for social housing are set to ensure the households can afford it, usually no more than 25- 30% of household income. The term social housing includes public housing and community housing.
- **Public housing** is owned and managed by the State Government and is not proposed for this project.
- **Community housing** is secure, affordable housing managed by not-for-profit organisations for people on low incomes.



## **Proposal**

This proposal is to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, to a Community Housing Organisation that would develop and manage the site for affordable housing. Because of their not-for-profit structure, they can deliver services cost effectively and to high standards. The community housing sector delivers affordable housing options to eligible households on the Victorian Housing Register as well as direct referrals. For this project, affordable homeownership would not be provided as dwellings on the property would be leased, not sold.

In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the leasing arrangement of the project is proposed to be a peppercorn lease up to a maximum 50-year period to a Community Housing Organisation. The organisation would be responsible for the development and management of the site for the agreed period.

Should Council decide to lease the land for affordable housing, its next steps would be to identify a Community Housing Organisation through an EOI process. At this stage, there would also be an opportunity to review and negotiate the terms and details of the lease and development.

It is recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to approve the selection of Community Housing Organisation (CHO) from the EOI process. This will ensure that the EOI process and subsequent community engagement is conducted in a timely manner. The preferred CHO will partner with Council to prepare plans for development of the site.

The draft plans and outcomes of the supporting engagement process will be ultimately presented to Council for consideration and decision. A timeline for next steps in the process, such as planning and development, will be subject to input from the selected CHO.

## **Community Consultation and Engagement**

### **Engagement Methodology**

The community engagement process for this proposal took place between September 2021 and July 2022.

The objectives of the community engagement for the proposal to lease land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert included informing the surrounding community about the proposal, providing the community with an opportunity to participate in a consultation process and provide informed submissions, and providing an opportunity to improve the concept development for this site within the parameters of this early phase of the process.

The target audience for the community engagement on this proposal included surrounding residents and homeowners of 1F Ashline Street, local community groups, the Wollert community, and the broader municipal community.

A range of community engagement activities were undertaken to inform, consult and involve community members on the proposal. The engagement process was conducted in two stages, however, throughout the process the 'Local affordable housing for Local People' webpage was active and regularly updated. Council officers also had ongoing email correspondence and phone calls with stakeholders and community members.

The first stage of engagement was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which meant that the engagement was conducted online. This stage of engagement included an online survey and an online information session. Due to the level of interest and questions received about the proposal, the project time frames were revised, and the engagement period was extended to enable the community to participate in further discussion and provide feedback. Stage two of the engagement involved three online focus groups and a community drop-in session at the nearby Kirrip Community Centre.

### Engagement Outcomes

Council used multiple methods to advertise engagement opportunities to the community. Overall, the engagement generated significant community interest. The table below shows the level of participation by engagement activity demonstrating this interest.

	How We Engaged	Stakeholders targeted	# of responses* / participants
Phase 1	Online Survey	Nearby properties, wider community, and key stakeholders	1031 responses
	Media Release	Wider community	-
	Information session	Letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties)  Community members who registered for the event (71 registrations)	19 participants online  478 subsequent YouTube views
	Letter drop	Immediate neighbours (81 properties)	-

<b>Phase 2</b>	Focus groups	Invitation via letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties)	22 participants
	Community drop-in session	Project email list Letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties) Project email list consisting of 436 email addresses	42 participants attended

\*Note: This figure identifies the number of responses rather than the number of respondents or participants to each engagement activity. The number of respondents/participants were not tracked through engagement activities and the survey was not restricted by Internet Protocol which would prevent multiple submissions. It is likely that some people participated in multiple engagement activities and/or submitted more than one response to the survey. As such the figure is not an accurate representation of the number of respondents.

In addition to the engagement activities listed in the above table, the project page on Engage Whittlesea had 5788 visits and council officers received 15 phone calls and 24 emails about the proposal.

The findings from the community engagement on this proposal indicate that a majority of participants did not support the proposal due to safety concerns, the appropriateness of the location and potential impacts on property values. This was consistent across both stages of the engagement for the proposal. Many of these reasons can be mitigated through controls in the proposed leasing arrangements should Council choose to go ahead with the proposal.

While not all participants in the engagement process provided demographic information, of those who did, the vast majority were aged between 26 to 45 and indicated they owned their own home with a mortgage.

This particular cohort was overrepresented in responses, according to City of Whittlesea demographics, while those aged 16 to 25 and 46 and over were under-represented.

Comments received also indicated the main concerns voiced were around impacts to those who owned property.

Whilst the lack of support for the proposal from those that participated was clear, it is noted that the results may not accurately represent younger and older people, social housing tenants and private renters living in the City of Whittlesea.



### *Engage Whittlesea Site Presence*

A project page for the proposal titled 'Local affordable housing for Local People' was published on the Engage Whittlesea site to provide information on the proposal and an opportunity to submit feedback. The webpage included a survey tool, frequently asked questions, detailed information about the proposal and a tool to sign up to the project email list. The website was open throughout the entire engagement period between July 2021 and October 2022 and received a total of 5788 visits.

### *Email Correspondence*

Community members were invited to ask questions or contribute via email throughout the engagement period. Throughout this time more than 24 emails were received and responses provided by Council Officers. The majority of the emails received from community members were to express their opposition to the proposal.

Project updates were also sent to community members via the project email list throughout the engagement period.

### Phase 1 Community Engagement

#### *Online Survey*

An online survey was published on the project webpage and distributed to surrounding residents via a letter box drop. The online survey was available for community members to respond in September 2021.

The online survey received a total of 1031 responses, indicating significant community interest in the proposal. Of those who responded, 87% responded that they live in the City of Whittlesea, 49% stated that they own a property in the City of Whittlesea and 13% work or study in the City of Whittlesea. Additionally, 83% of respondents stated that they live in Wollert.

A majority of responses opposed the proposal to lease land at 1F Ashline Street for an affordable housing development (89 per cent) and 10 per cent of responses supported the proposal with 1 per cent of responses being neutral.

### *Information Session*

The online information session was conducted on 6 October 2021. The information session was facilitated by an external facilitator and included presentations by a Council officer, affordable housing expert and affordable housing design and built form expert.

The information session was designed for community members and stakeholders to hear about the proposal in detail and have questions answered. The information session also responded to misinformation about the proposal and general misunderstanding about affordable housing. Participants were asked to submit questions prior to the event as part of registering for participation.

The information session had 71 event registrations and 19 participants submitted 67 questions. There were 17 people who submitted questions prior to the event. A video recording of the information session was subsequently published to the Council's YouTube page which received a total of 478 views.

### Phase 2 Community Engagement

#### *Focus Groups*

A series of three focus groups were conducted in June 2022. Each focus group lasted between 1.5-2 hours and were led by external facilitators. An invitation and expression of interest form was distributed to the project email list and to residents within 400 metres of the proposed housing site via letter.

The purpose of the focus groups was to learn more about the community's specific concerns about the proposal, explore any benefits that might be identified and discuss how the proposal could be altered to address any concerns and maximise opportunities.

Four session times were offered for the focus groups but due to insufficient numbers, one of the sessions was cancelled. While 37 people registered for the focus group sessions, 22 (59%) attended their session. 9 out of 13 registered participants at session one, 4 of 12 registered participants at session two and 9 of 12 registered participants at session three.

#### *Community Drop-In Session*

The community drop-in session took place on 16 July 2022 at the Kirrip Community Centre in Wollert, which was proximate to the Ashline Street site. The community drop in was publicised to previous engagement participants, via the project website and letterboxed to properties within 400m of the proposed housing site.

The purpose of the session was to provide an opportunity for in-person engagement and provide community members with an opportunity to ask questions, give feedback and gain information about the proposal. The session was conducted by external facilitators and Council Officers with external experts in affordable housing and affordable housing design, representatives from a community housing organisation, and people with lived experience of affordable housing in attendance.

At the session there were several 'voting' boards where participants could vote on whether they agreed with a statement about the project based on previous community engagement. An evaluation card was also provided to the drop-in session participants which requested demographic information as well as two questions with a scalar response.

In total, 34 adults and 8 children attended the 3-hour drop-in session. The majority of participants at the community drop-in session indicated that they were not supportive of the proposal.

### **Discussion of Key Themes**

Information from the entire engagement process has been summarised into key themes and analysed by Council Officers. A response to each of the key themes is provided below.

#### Safety and crime

An issue raised across both stages of the engagement was the view that the proposed affordable housing would impact on safety and increase crime in the neighbourhood. There were some perceptions expressed about social housing tenants more broadly in relation to the concern that tenants of affordable housing would contribute to an increase in crime in the locality and impact on a broader sense of wellbeing and safety.

#### *Officer Response*

There is little evidence to support the claim that a new affordable housing development increases crime in a particular neighbourhood. Research shows that providing affordable housing can produce wider social and economic benefits to the community.

Additionally, community housing providers have obligations under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* to ensure the privacy, peace and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring residents are not affected by tenants. Community housing organisations provide high standards of responsiveness to the needs of community housing residents through tenancy and property management as well as often supporting the needs of community housing residents through arrangements with support agencies, education initiatives or programs.

Care needs to be taken to ensure everyone is protected from defamatory treatment and avoid the labelling of social housing tenants in a way that is disrespectful. Relating a proposal for affordable housing with concerns of crime and safety serves to further perpetuates the stigmatisation of social and affordable housing tenants.

Notwithstanding, Council is committed to supporting community cohesion and inclusivity to help facilitate positive and sustainable outcomes for all community members. Should the proposal proceed, it is recommended that Council establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing on the site.



It is recommended that the community development program confronts and addresses the stigmatisation of those living in affordable housing, work with children and young people in school settings to minimise bullying and exclusion and provide activities for multi- and cross-cultural celebration to develop more appreciative views of neighbourhood difference.

#### Selecting the appropriate site

A frequently raised issue related to the perception that the location is inappropriate for affordable housing and that it should be delivered in an alternative location. Community engagement participants raised concerns that the site is inappropriate for affordable housing due to its proximity to a school and lack of infrastructure in the area to service the development, including public transportation and other social infrastructure.

#### *Officer Response*

There is a significant undersupply of affordable housing in Wollert, particularly for people on low incomes. The site at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert was determined to be an appropriate site for delivering affordable housing within the municipality based on its proximity of the site to Wollert Primary School and the future secondary school. Additionally, the site is well serviced by a bus and public open space network.

Community housing providers can establish additional eligibility criteria for their properties. Many community housing providers provide housing for specific groups or “cohorts” of people, including but not limited to groups such as women, families, people with disabilities, veterans, older people, and key worker accommodation. It is a reasonable expectation that the locational context of the site will be one of the determinants that will be considered when determining the appropriateness of the site for any specific cohort.

Should Council determine to proceed with the proposal, it is recommended that additional eligibility criteria are developed for the affordable housing development that take into account the site’s locational factors, social sustainability and local community connections. It is recommended that the EOI stipulates that tenant allocation preference local residents or people with local connections, and the requirement that tenant allocation be to one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, people with disabilities and key workers.

#### Economic impacts

Concern that the affordable housing development would negatively impact on existing property values was a frequently raised issue throughout the community engagement process.

*Officer Response*

There is little evidence to suggest that affordable housing developments negatively impact the values of surrounding properties. A study by the Australian Housing and Research Institute found that the impact of affordable housing on property sales values can be positive or negative but is usually minimal either way and is far outweighed by other factors, including broader economic conditions.

If Council decides to proceed with the lease, the housing would be of a similar look and feel to the surrounding properties and be a high-quality development. Additionally, the houses would be managed by a community housing organisation with proven expertise in property management, tenancy management and community development.

Council process

Many community engagement participants said that they were unaware and concerned with the change in designation of the site from a Community Activity Centre to affordable housing. Some were concerned that this change occurred after they purchased their property as they did so under the assumption that the site would be used for a Community Activity Centre.

Participants expressed frustration with the community engagement process for the project. They felt they were not properly notified of the proposal and that it lacked face to face engagement opportunities.

*Officer Response*

The decision to deliver the community activity centre on the adjacent school site was made on the basis that it would provide for a larger facility capable of accommodating a greater range of services integrated with the school. This decision was taken prior to, and completely independent of, any decision on the potential use of the site for affordable housing.

The first phase of engagement took place during lock downs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant that the engagement was conducted online only and included a web-based information session and a survey. Conducting the engagement solely online was not Council officers' preferred approach given the complexity of the project. Given these limitations, Council officers tried to inform as many people as possible through letter box drops, email and phone correspondence and newspaper articles.

Based on community feedback and Councils own assessment, the engagement was then extended into 2022 for a second phase. This allowed for more opportunities for community to get involved and included face-to-face engagement with in-depth exploration of key ideas, opportunities and concerns with the proposal.

Should Council determine to proceed with the leasing of the site, community engagement will continue on the design and layout of the development.

#### Traffic and car parking

Concern that the affordable housing development would negatively impact on traffic and car parking in the area was a common issue raised. Community engagement participants expressed that the project would increase traffic and congestion, present a road safety threat and would impact on car parking provision in the area.

#### *Officer Response*

Traffic and car parking would be a key consideration for any ultimate development for this site. Council would need to ensure that the development has sufficient car parking for future residents, safe pedestrian access and efficient local traffic connections. Any development for the site would need to provide car parking for new residents as required by the planning scheme.

#### Scale and appearance of the development

Many community engagement participants across both stages of the engagement were concerned that the scale, density, height, form and look of the development would not be appropriate for the area. Participants raised the specific concern that a high density development would not fit in with the existing low-scale nature of the surrounding neighbourhood and would contribute to over-population within the neighbourhood.

#### *Officer Response*

The current planning scheme provisions for the site would allow for between 16 and 36 homes to be built depending on the layout and design of the dwellings and for buildings to be built up to 3 storeys. The community engagement process has indicated a clear preference for the dwellings to be designed in a way that integrates with, and respects, the existing development and character of the surrounding area, and that a higher density proposal would not be supported. This is considered reasonable proposition and it is recommended that this feedback is reflected in the design of any future development.

Should the proposal proceed, Council would work closely with the community housing provider on the layout and design of any dwellings on the site. The development would need to be of a similar quality and design to the surrounding area to ensure that it is well integrated with existing neighbourhood character.

It is therefore recommended that the development does not exceed two storeys and be limited to single detached, duplex and townhouse housing only. It is also recommended that the development uses similar fittings and features to the surrounding housing.



An additional community engagement process would be undertaken at the draft plans stage on any proposed development on the site.

#### Alternative proposals

Some feedback received requested alternative uses for the site that they believed would better serve the existing community. Responses suggested a range of options, including a library, swimming pool, sports facility, park, community centre or private residential development.

#### *Officer Response*

The uses proposed by community engagement participants may not be appropriate for the site for a range of reasons, including the surrounding context and specific site constraints. The need and location of essential community infrastructure, including open space and community facilities, are identified in the strategic plans for the area in terms of number, scale and location. There are existing parks, open spaces and the Kirrip Community Centre is located adjacent to the site. There is an active recreation reserve planned for within the broader residential precinct proximate to the site and future library planned for the Wollert Town Centre.

Council have also recently committed to the delivery of a library hub at the Kirrip Community Centre in response to community feedback as part of a range of consultation processes. The hub will include bookshelves, adult and children's seating, self-checkout kiosk and returns area, with collection items available in a variety of languages and is expected to be operation by the end of 2023.

Noting the above, it is recommended that should Council determine to proceed with the proposal, it is recommended that the EOI require that a flexible community space be included on the site that would be available for use by the broader community. This space would be managed by Council and integrate with the facilities and services provided within the adjacent Community Activity Centre. The ultimate design and use of this space would be determined at a later stage in the process.

#### Support for affordable housing

Those who supported the proposal raised a number of factors to support their position. These include the potential for the proposed affordable housing development to support vulnerable people who are socially and economically disadvantaged, single parents, families and people experiencing homelessness. Participants stated that affordable housing is a social right and that everyone deserves access to housing. The broad and local need for affordable housing was also cited as a reason to support the proposal.

## Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

### Liveable neighbourhoods

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

The Liveable Neighbourhoods goal of Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025 includes the key direction of 'Housing for Diverse needs', which aims to increase the amount of affordable housing in the municipality.

The City of Whittlesea's adopted Social and affordable housing Policy and Strategy recognises that access to affordable and appropriate housing is a human right and basic need. This proposal responds to Council's commitment under the Policy which states that Council '*actively encourages and facilitates the provision of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for very low, low and moderate income households across the municipality*'.

## Considerations

### Discussion

The proposal to lease Council-owned land at 1F Ashline Street for affordable housing has generated significant opposition from the community which has been expressed through the two phases of engagement between September 2021 and July 2022.

Whilst a significant matter to consider, community sentiment is not the only factor that should be taken into consideration when determining whether to proceed with the proposal. The needs of those vulnerable to housing insecurity and potential future tenants of the affordable housing must also be considered when assessing the viability of the proposal.

It is important that the overall impact of the proposal is considered against the benefit it would create. If delivered, affordable housing in this location would provide secure affordable housing for those on low incomes. Affordable housing supports more diverse and robust communities through increasing social diversity, tolerance and inclusion for all household types.

There is significant strategic policy justification for the delivery of affordable housing on this site. There is support for addressing housing affordability across a range of levels of policy and law. Several of Council's policies, plans and strategic documents encourage the provision of affordable housing within the municipality. Further, this site has been assessed as suitable for affordable housing due to its location attributes and development potential.

The City of Whittlesea has a significant need for affordable housing, especially for those on very low incomes, and there is a significant shortage of affordable housing. Currently there is around 3,606 households (4.7%) with an unmet need for affordable housing in the municipality. Should this proposal go ahead, it would be a small step in addressing this shortfall. The benefits the proposal would create in meeting the needs and rights of those vulnerable to housing insecurity are considered to outweigh perceived negative impacts.

#### *Actions arising from the engagement process*

There were a range of opportunities provided to the community to contribute. While the majority of the responses were not supportive of the proposal, some of the issues relating to safety, amenity and design can be addressed. In relation to these issues, it is recommended that the following criteria are included in the EOI process and any legal agreement with the preferred CHO to help meet the needs of existing and future residents:

- Ensure a high-quality design that is integrated with and responds to the surrounding neighbourhood character.
- The development does not exceed two storeys and be single detached, duplex and townhouse style only.
- The development uses similar design features and finishes present in the surrounding dwellings within the precinct.
- Establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing.
- Provision of a flexible community space be included on the site that would be available for use by the broader community to be managed by Council as part of the adjacent Community Activity Centre.
- Preference for local residents or people with local connections.
- Tenant allocation to be prioritised on one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, key workers and people with disabilities.

#### **Financial Implications**

The proposal for this site is to lease the land at a peppercorn lease. The only other cost would be any ongoing community development program that Council participates in with the CHO.

Ultimately the project will be dependent on the CHO securing funding to deliver the project.

#### **Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing**

The provision of social and affordable housing and related support services is considered critical community infrastructure and services.



Council has legislated responsibilities for housing-related matters under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, such as land use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning and development, building controls, community consultation and engagement, and advocacy.

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

Council has provided the community with multiple opportunities to engage and provide feedback on the proposal. The majority of feedback received has been opposed to the project. However, the recommendations included in this report have sought to address some of the issues raised through the community engagement process should the proposal be advanced.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

The outcomes of this decision will be community through Council's Engage Whittlesea platform, directly to participants via email and through a variety of Council's communication channels.

### Next Steps

If the proposal is advanced, the next steps would include:

- Commence an EOI process to determine an appropriate CHO to develop and manage the site for affordable housing.
- Negotiation of the details and terms of the lease and development with the chosen housing organisation.
- Draft design layout for the site prepared by the community housing organisation in collaboration with Council officers.
- Community engagement process on the draft design and layout for the site.
- Council Report and Decision on the final design and layout for the site.
- Statutory permits / approvals sought for final design.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

## Conclusion

Council has undertaken a process of community engagement to consider the lease of land at 1F Ashline Street for the purpose of affordable housing. The process was extensively advertised and a range of opportunities to gain information and provide feedback on the proposal were provided, including an online website, survey, information session, and letter box drops, a media release, focus groups and a community drop-in session.

Majority of the feedback from the community engagement did not support the proposal to lease the land for affordable housing with safety, amenity and traffic concerns.

However, there is significant strategic justification and need for affordable housing in this location. Whittlesea 2040, the Community Plan 2021-2025, Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan, Whittlesea Planning Scheme and Council's Social and affordable housing Policy and Strategy 2012-2016 all support and encourage the provision of affordable housing. Furthermore, the current economic climate is providing additional pressure on household budgets which is increasing demand for affordable housing.

The proposal seeks to address the community concerns raised through engagement while considering the broader community benefits of affordable housing. The proposal will help to address the critical undersupply of affordable housing in the municipality and help to provide additional secure housing for local people.

It is therefore recommended that Council proceed with leasing the site for affordable housing, taking into consideration community feedback and suggested mitigations, and commence an EOI process to identify a suitable CHO to develop and manage the site. It is also recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to select a suitable CHO to partner with Council based on the requirements outlined in this report and in the recommendation.





### 5.5.3 Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Reserve - Garrong Avenue, Wollert

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director Customer & Corporate Services
<b>Author</b>	Elly Michailidis, Property Advisor
<b>In Attendance</b>	George Vassiliadis, Unit Manager Strategic Property
<b>Attachments</b>	

1. Attachment 1 - Road Discontinuance Plan - Garrong [5.5.3.1 - 1 page]
2. Attachment 2 - Aerial view [5.5.3.2 - 1 page]

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report seeks Council's approval to finalise the statutory procedures under the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020* for the discontinuance and sale of two road splays in Garrong Avenue, Wollert. The section of the road splays concerned for Garrong Avenue are shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and contained in certificate of title Volume 12262 Folio 901.

#### Brief Overview

Council had received a request from the owner/developer of the land adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, within the Aurora Estate, (Lendlease Communities Ltd.), for the discontinuance and sale of two redundant road splays in Garrong Avenue shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and on the aerial view (Attachment 2). The road splays were originally created within a plan of subdivision for the Estate. The layout of the abutting lots and intersecting roads has recently been altered to provide an improved layout which required a shift to two of the intersections and resulted in two of the original splays (each being 3m<sup>2</sup> in area) being made redundant.

Commencement of the statutory procedures for the proposed discontinuance and sale of the road reserve listed above were approved under delegation at the ELT meeting on 15 November 2022. The formal consultation was commenced on 17 January 2023 with public notice of the proposal being given in the Whittlesea Review newspaper and on Council's website for the duration of the 28-day submission period.

The notice period ended on 14 February 2023 with no submissions received.

## Recommendation

### THAT Council:

1. Note that no submissions were received in regard to Council having given public notice of a proposal to discontinue the two sections of road reserve (splays) in Garrong Avenue, Wollert, shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1).
2. Note that the two sections of road reserve (splays) are no longer reasonably required for road purposes.
3. Resolve to discontinue and sell the two sections of road reserve and publish a notice in the Victoria Government Gazette, in accordance with section 206 and clause 3(a) of Schedule 10 to the Local Government Act 1989.
4. Resolve that the land from the two sections of road reserve (splays) be sold by private treaty to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate, pursuant to section 206 and clause 3(b) of Schedule 10 to the Local Government Act 1989 and section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020.
5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or any such other person as the Chief Executive Officer approves, to sign all documents relating to the sale of the land from the discontinued road reserve (splays) to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate.

## Key Information

Council had received a request from the owner/developer of the land adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, within the Aurora Estate, (Lendlease Communities Ltd.), for the discontinuance and sale of two redundant road splays in Garrong Avenue.

The road splays were originally created within a plan of subdivision for the Estate. The layout of the abutting lots and intersecting roads has recently been altered to provide an improved layout which required a shift to two of the intersections and resulted in two of the original splays being made redundant.

Accordingly, each of the 3m<sup>2</sup> splays on the south-western side of Garrong Avenue, Wollert, shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and on the aerial view (Attachment 2) are considered to no longer be required as roads for public use.

The statutory procedures for the proposed discontinuance and sale of the section of road reserve were approved under delegation and were commenced on 17 January 2023.

## Community Consultation and Engagement

Public notice of the proposal was given in the Whittlesea Review newspaper and on Council's website on 17 January 2023 with the submission period closing on 14 February 2023. No submissions were received.

## Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

### High performing organisation

We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

As per the reasons above, the parcels of land adjoining Garrong Avenue and Girvan Place are considered to no longer be required by Council.

## Considerations

### Environmental

There are no Environmental implications in relation to this matter.

### Social, Cultural and Health

There are no Social, Cultural and Health implications in relation to this matter.

### Economic

There are no Economic implications in relation to this matter.

### Financial Implications

Subject to the successful completion of the statutory procedures, the owner/developer of the estate adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, has agreed to acquire the land from the road reserve (splays) at its current market value and to also meet all of Council's reasonable costs associated with undertaking the discontinuance.

## Link to Strategic Risk

### Strategic Risk *Not linked to the risks within the Strategic Risk Register*

There are no Strategic Risks in relation to this matter. The parcel of land is redundant and are not required by Council. Relevant internal stakeholders agreed to undertake the proposed discontinuance and sale of the parcels.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Notice of the discontinuance will be published in the Victoria Government Gazette.

### Critical Dates

Report to Council Meeting 18 April 2023

Notice in Government Gazette to follow meeting



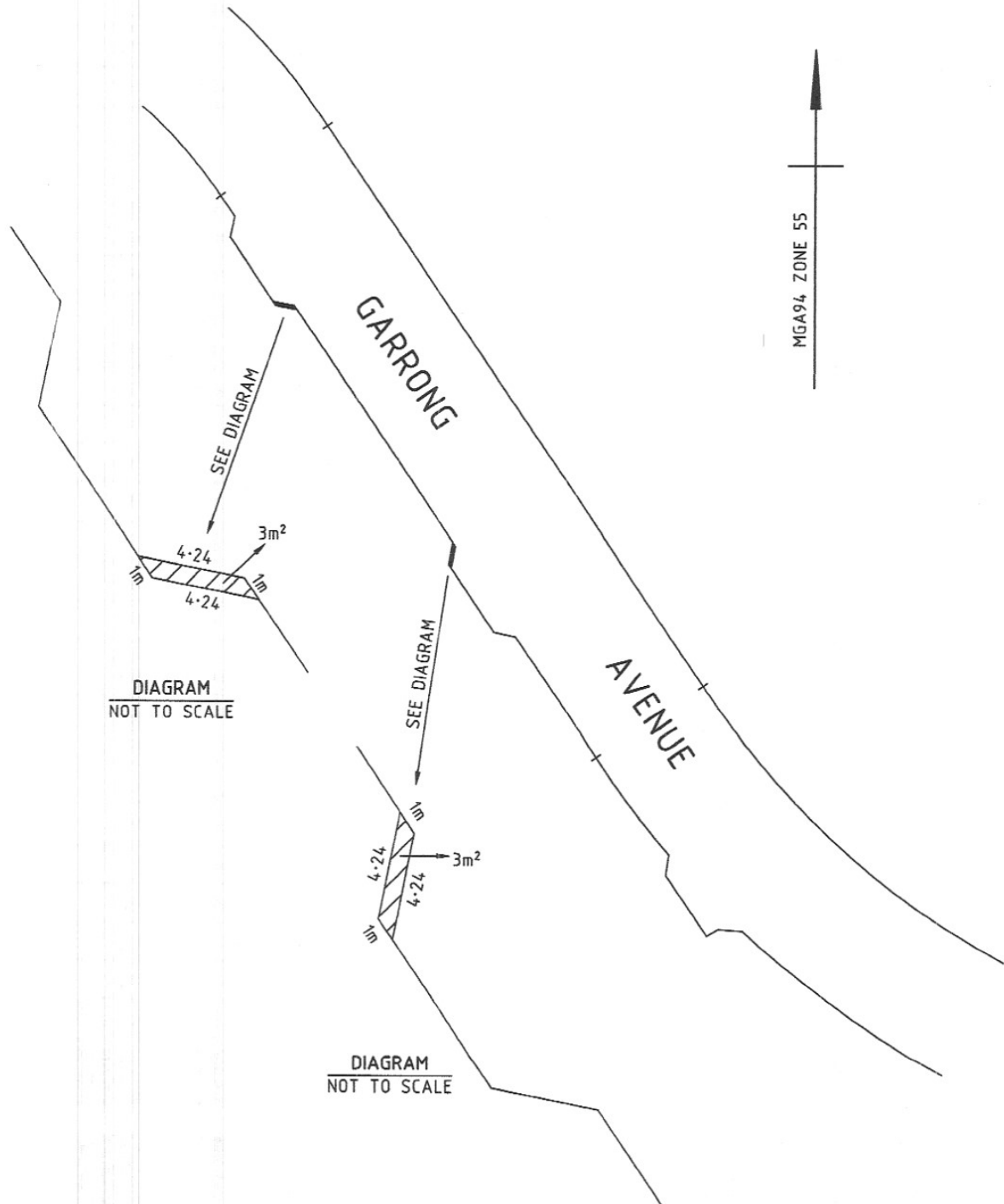
### **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### **Conclusion**

The discontinuance and sale of the two sections of road reserve (splays) in Garrong Avenue, Wollert, which are considered to no longer be reasonably required for public use, to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate, is considered appropriate.









### 5.5.4 Appointment of Council Representation on Organisations and Committees

<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO
<b>Author</b>	Sarah Rowe, Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO
<b>In Attendance</b>	Sarah Rowe, Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

#### Attachments

1. Proposed representation on organisations and committees - 18 April 2023 [5.5.4.1 - 18 pages]

#### Purpose

The purpose of the report is to review Council representatives to organisations and committees for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024. This enables ongoing Council representation, participation and contribution to local and strategic organisations.

#### Brief Overview

On 12 December 2022 Council appointed representatives to organisations and committees for the period to 31 December 2023. With the recent appointment of Administrator Zahra, this report provides Council with the opportunity to review Council representation based on the organisation's strategic significance and its alignment with the achievement of Council's goals.

#### Recommendation

##### THAT Council:

1. **Nominate Administrator delegates to the organisations and committees that have been identified to be of strategic significance listed as follows for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024 (also highlighted in yellow in Attachment 1):**
  - **Audit and Risk Committee (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson and Administrator Zahra**
  - **Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) (External) – Administrator Duncan**
  - **CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC) (Internal) – All Administrators**
  - **Business Advisory Panel (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**
  - **Community Awards Committee (Internal) – Administrator Zahra**
  - **Interface Councils Group (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**

- **Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**
  - **Northern Councils Alliance (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Zahra**
  - **Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) (External) – All Administrators**
  - **Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal) – Administrator Duncan**
  - **Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson**
- 2. Nominate Officers to the organisations and committees listed as follows for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024 (as per Attachment 1):**
- **Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External)**
  - **Business Advisory Panel (Internal)**
  - **Community Awards Committee (Internal)**
  - **Darebin Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)**
  - **Friends of South Morang (External)**
  - **Interface Councils Group (External)**
  - **Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)**
  - **Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc. (External)**
  - **Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) (Internal)**
  - **Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA) (External)**
  - **Northern Councils Alliance (External)**
  - **Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) (Internal)**
  - **Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG) (External)**
  - **Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership (External)**
  - **Whittlesea Courthouse Association (External)**
  - **Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) (External)**
  - **Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC) (External)**
  - **Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal)**
  - **Whittlesea Showground and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management (External)**
  - **Youth Advisory Committee (Internal)**
  - **Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group (WYC) (External)**
  - **Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External)**

## Key Information

Council participation on organisations and committees ensures involvement, participation and contribution to matters relevant to local and strategic organisations.

Discussions were held with Council at Briefings on 4 April 2023 to inform of this report and determine recommendations for Administrator representation as outlined below.

### ***Administrator representation***

It is proposed that Administrators provide representation on the following internal and external organisations and committees (as highlighted in yellow in Attachment 1):

- Audit and Risk Committee (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson and Administrator Zahra
- Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External) - Administrator Duncan
- CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC) (Internal) – All Administrators
- Business Advisory Panel (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, and substitute Administrator Duncan
- Community Awards Committee (Internal) - Administrator Zahra
- Interface Councils Group (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan
- Northern Councils Alliance (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Zahra
- Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) (External) – All Administrators
- Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal) - Administrator Duncan
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson

### ***Officer representation***

It is proposed that Officers continue to provide representation on the following internal and external organisations and committees:

- Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External)
- Business Advisory Panel (Internal)
- Community Awards Committee (Internal)
- Darebin Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)
- Friends of South Morang (External)
- Interface Councils Group (External)
- Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)
- Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc. (External)



- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) (Internal)
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA) (External)
- Northern Councils Alliance (External)
- Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) (Internal)
- Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG) (Internal)
- Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership (External)
- Whittlesea Courthouse Association (External)
- Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) (External)
- Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC) (External)
- Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal)
- Whittlesea Showground and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management (External)
- Youth Advisory Committee (Internal)
- Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group (WYC) (Internal)
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External)

Further details relating to the nature of the Administrator and Officer representations are set out in attachment 1.

### Community Consultation and Engagement

The appointment of Council representatives on organisations and committees enables Council to engage with community and for representatives to provide relevant feedback to Council at Council meetings each month.

Consultation with Council on potential appointments occurred on 4 April 2023. Council's preferences of representatives have been included within the recommendation of this report.

### Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### Connected communities

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

Council representation on a range of internal and external organisations and committees provides an opportunity for Council to input into the decision-making processes of those organisations and committees and ensure the interest of Council and the community is represented. It also provides an opportunity for Council to be informed of the activities and priorities of key strategic and community organisations and committees.

## Considerations

### Environmental

The participation in numerous committees supports environmental partnerships, awareness and action and is aligned to Council's Sustainable Environment strategy.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The participation in numerous committees supports partnerships, awareness and actions relating to the social, cultural and health considerations impacting our community.

### Economic

The participation in numerous committees supports economic development and partnership with local business and is aligned with Council's strong local economy strategy and action plan.

### Financial Implications

The cost of Council participation in organisations and committees is included in the relevant operating budgets.

## Link to Strategic Risk

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction.*

Council participation in organisations and committees enhances Council's ability to engage with the community and to provide the best outcomes for the community in line with Council's strategic direction.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Council will write to each committee and organisation to inform them of Council's nominated representatives.

### Critical Dates

Current appointments are made until 31 December 2023. The appointments made in this report will take effect for the period 19 April 2023 – 31 October 2024.

### **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### **Conclusion**

It is recommended that Council determine appointments to organisations and committees for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024. This enables ongoing Council representation, participation and contribution to local and strategic organisations.



ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b><i>Audit &amp; Risk Committee (Internal)</i></b></p> <p>The Audit &amp; Risk Committee's purpose is to assist Council to fulfil its oversight responsibilities for the financial and non-financial reporting process, internal controls, the audit process, risk management and Council's process for monitoring compliance with legislation and regulations and the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>The Charter provides for two Administrator delegates with voting rights. The Charter is currently being reviewed by the Committee with a view to allowing the appointment of a substitute. If these changes are approved a Substitute may be by the Council Representative.</p> <p><b><i>Independent members of the Committee are separately appointed by Council for a fixed term.</i></b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Zahra <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p>	<p>Charter adopted by Council on 4 October 2021. An update to the Charter will be considered by Council in early 2023.</p>	<p><b><i>Thursdays from 2.30-5.30pm on 16 February, 25 May, 24 August, 21 September and 23 November 2023</i></b></p>

ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b>Australian Local Government Women's Association Incorporated (ALGWA) (External)</b></p> <p>ALGWA is the peak body representing the interests of women in local government across Australia. The Association seeks to assist in furthering women's knowledge, understanding and participation in the function of Local Government.</p> <p><b><i>Council's membership entitles it to appoint one delegate for the purposes of communication with Council and the delegate also has voting rights. The delegate has the right to stand for election to the Executive Committee of Management, which is separate to being the Council delegate. Council membership entitles anyone at Council to receive discounted rates when attending events held by the Association. The Association conducts several functions each year and members are informed of these events via email and the Association's webpage.</i></b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Chief Executive Officer or delegate</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Chief Executive Officer or delegate</p>	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution	<b>State Conference and yearly AGM</b>

ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b>CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee</b> (Internal Advisory Committee)</p> <p>The Advisory Committee is to make recommendations to Council on contractual employment matters, performance matters and any other functions or responsibilities prescribed by the Act relating to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).</p> <p><b>An independent person is also a member of the Committee and is appointed by Council for a fixed term in a separate report.</b></p>	Y	<p><b>All Administrators</b> (Independent member is the Chairperson of this Committee)</p>	<p><b>All Administrators</b> (Independent member is the Chairperson of this Committee)</p>	<p><b>CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy adopted by Council 25 October 2021</b></p>	<p><b>25 July 2023 and 6 February 2024</b></p>
<p><b>City of Whittlesea Business Advisory Panel</b> (Internal Advisory Committee)</p> <p>The Business Advisory Panel (the Panel) enables business members to work together with Council in delivering the key objective and advocacy for a Strong Local Economy (one of the four overarching objectives in the Council's 2040 Plan.)</p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson</p> <p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan</p> <p><b>Officers:</b> Director Planning and Development</p> <p>Manager Economic Development</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson</p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> Administrator Duncan</p> <p><b>Officers:</b> Director Planning and Development</p> <p>Manager Economic Development</p>	<p>Terms of Reference adopted by Council on 15 August 2022.</p> <p>Under Manager Economic Development delegation, Terms of Reference will be 'up to two Administrators or Councillors' or one with substitute.</p>	<p><b>Meetings will be held 20 April and 8 June 2023 from 12-2pm at various locations. Dates following to be confirmed.</b></p>



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<p><b><i>City of Whittlesea Community Awards Committee</i></b>  <b><i>(Internal Advisory Committee)</i></b></p> <p>This Committee will represent a cross-section of the community to promote and administer the City of Whittlesea Community Awards.</p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Executive Manager Public Affairs</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Zahra</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Executive Manager Public Affairs</p>	Terms of Reference adopted by Council on 5 May 2021	<i>Future dates to be confirmed.</i>

ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b><i>Darebin Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)</i></b></p> <p>The Committee promotes the preservation, environmental protection and ecologically sensitive development and maintenance of the Darebin Creek Linear Park.</p> <p>The Committee also undertakes individual projects that benefit the local community by promoting environmental awareness through Councils, schools and the wider community.</p> <p><b><i>Meetings of the Association are governed by its constitution which provides for one Council delegate with voting rights on the Committee of Management.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The appointment of a substitute is permitted under the constitution and the substitute delegate has voting rights in lieu of the delegate.</i></b></p>	N	<p><b>Officers:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or delegate</p> <p>Unit Manager Parks &amp; City Forest Management</p>	<p><b>Officers:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or delegate</p> <p>Unit Manager Parks &amp; City Forest Management</p>	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution	<b><i>Meets on the last Wednesday of every second month at 5pm.</i></b>

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<p><b><i>Friends of South Morang</i></b></p> <p>FOSM was incorporated on 11 March 2002 and, based on its Statement of Purpose its objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the development of educational facilities, programs, services and activities for the benefit of residents</li> <li>• Foster the development of recreation, sport and community facilities, programs, services and activities for the benefit of residents</li> <li>• Promote the protection and enhancement of the flora and fauna of the Plenty River Gorge and surrounding areas</li> <li>• Promote the development of local infrastructure to meet these objectives</li> <li>• Consult with relevant government and non-government agencies or organisations for the purpose of achieving these objectives, and</li> <li>• Seek and raise funds to pursue the objectives of the Association.</li> </ul>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or Delegate</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or delegate</p>	Incorporated Association governed by its Rules.	<p><b><i>Meetings are held in South Morang on the second Thursday of each month commencing at 7.30pm.</i></b></p>



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<p><b><i>Interface Councils Group (External)</i></b></p> <p>This Group includes Whittlesea, Nillumbik, Hume, Mitchell, Melton, Cardinia, Casey, Yarra Ranges, Wyndham and Mornington Peninsula Councils, which are characterised by being part rural and part urban.</p> <p>At its Forum held on 3 December 2014 the Interface Councils Group agreed that Councils could nominate an alternate delegate to attend the Interface Council's Group Forums and to participate in delegations to Ministers.</p> <p>Council on 3 February 2015 resolved to nominate substitute delegates to this Group.</p> <p><b><i>Meetings of this Group are governed by its terms of reference which provide for one Council delegate, who is the Mayor of the Day, with voting rights.</i></b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, <b>Administrator Wilson</b> <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Administrator Duncan</b></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Director Planning &amp; Development or delegate nominated by the Chief Executive Officer</b></p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, <b>Administrator Wilson</b> <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Administrator Duncan</b></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Director Planning &amp; Development or delegate nominated by the Chief Executive Officer</b></p>	Unincorporated group governed by a Terms of Reference.	<p><b><i>31 May 2023</i></b></p> <p><b><i>23 August 2023</i></b></p> <p><b><i>22 November 2023</i></b></p>

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<p><b>MAV - Municipal Association of Victoria (External)</b></p> <p>The MAV provides industry leadership by supporting local government to achieve high levels of respect and recognition through improved performance.</p> <p><i>Meetings of the Association are governed by its Rules which provide for Council's delegate to have voting rights.</i></p> <p><i>The Delegate attends and votes at State Council meeting.</i></p> <p><i>The appointment of a substitute is permitted under the Rules and the substitute delegate has voting rights in lieu of the delegate.</i></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson (Member with voting rights)</p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> Administrator Duncan</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson (Member with voting rights)</p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> Administrator Duncan</p>	Created by the Municipal Association of Victoria Act 1907 (as amended)	19 May 2023. Future dates to be confirmed.

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<p><b><i>Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)</i></b></p> <p>This Association promotes the management of the Merri Creek and its catchment through the provision of technical advice and support to Councils and other agencies.</p> <p><b><i>Meetings of the Association are governed by its Constitution which provides for two Council delegates on the Management Committee with voting rights. There is no reference in the Constitution to the appointment of a substitute.</i></b></p>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or delegate</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Infrastructure &amp; Environment or delegate</p>	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution	<p><b><i>Meets every third Thursday of month alternating between City of Moreland and City of Whittlesea in February, May, August and November each year at 6:30pm.</i></b></p>



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<p><b>Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc. (External)</b></p> <p>This Forum promotes effective, efficient and equitable transport in metropolitan Melbourne by providing a forum for debate, research and policy development, and by disseminating information to improve transport choices.</p> <p><i>Meetings of the Forum are governed by its Constitution which provides for Council's delegate to have voting rights.</i></p> <p><i>The appointment of a substitute is permitted under the Constitution and the substitute delegate has voting rights in lieu of the delegate.</i></p>	N	<p><b>Officers:</b></p> <p>Manager Urban Design</p> <p>Unit Manager Traffic &amp; Transport</p>	<p><b>Officers:</b></p> <p>Manager Urban Design</p> <p>Unit Manager Traffic &amp; Transport</p>	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution.	<p><i>Meets first Wednesday of month at Melbourne Town Hall from February to December, 6pm-8.30pm.</i></p>
<p><b>Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) (Internal)</b></p> <p>The Committee is made up of fire response agencies and is responsible for maintaining a fire prevention and response process for the municipality.</p> <p><i>The delegate has voting rights.</i></p>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b></p> <p>Municipal Fire Prevention Officer</p> <p>The MFMPC will be invited to attend a Council briefing annually and Administrators may be invited as guests to the committee meeting as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b></p> <p>Municipal Fire Prevention Officer</p> <p>The MFMPC will be invited to attend a Council briefing annually and Administrators may be invited as guests to the committee meeting as appropriate.</p>	Created by Council as an obligation under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958 (as amended).	<p><i>Meetings are held four times per year.</i></p>

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<p><b><i>Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA) (External)</i></b></p> <p>The NAGA formed in 2002 as a network to share information, skills and resources related to climate change action. NAGA's members are the cities of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Manningham, Melbourne, Moreland, Whittlesea, Yarra, Shire of Nillumbik and Moreland Energy Foundation (MEFL). NAGA'S goal is to substantially contribute to the transition to a low-carbon future.</p> <p><b><i>The NAGA Executive was formed in 2009 to ensure sound and effective decision-making. It is a senior leadership group comprising Councillors, Council Senior and Executive Officers, CEO of MEFL and NAGA Executive Officer. Decisions are generally made by consensus and therefore voting is not usually required. Officer delegates have observer status only.</i></b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council – Administrator Wilson</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Director Infrastructure and Environment or delegate <i>(May be a substitute in the Administrator Delegate's absence. Is an observer when the Administrator Delegate attends a meeting of the Executive.)</i></p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Director Infrastructure and Environment or delegate</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Manager Sustainable Environment <i>(May be a substitute in the Delegate's absence. Is an observer when the Delegate attends a meeting of the Executive.)</i></p>	Memorandum of Understanding	<b><i>Meetings usually held quarterly at MAV, 60 Collins Street</i></b>

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<p><b>Northern Councils Alliance (External)</b></p> <p>The Northern Councils Alliance represents and works collectively for residents across seven municipalities including Banyule City Council, City of Darebin, Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Moreland City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council and the City of Whittlesea.</p> <p>As a group of Councils, the Alliance is committed to working to deliver and advocate for ongoing improvements to the economic, social, health and wellbeing for its residents and businesses both current and future.</p> <p>At the September 2019 meeting of the Alliance, Mayors and CEOs of member councils were signatories to a Memorandum of Understanding outlining that membership of the Alliance is to comprise one appointed Councillor representative from each member Council, supported by the CEO from each member Council. A substitute representative for the Councillor delegate may be appointed to the Alliance.</p> <p>The Memorandum of Understanding (the Charter) provides for voting rights.</p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council – <b>Administrator Wilson</b> <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Administrator Duncan</b></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Director Planning &amp; Development or delegate nominated by the Chief Executive Officer</b></p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council – <b>Administrator Wilson</b> <i>(Member with voting rights)</i></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Administrator Zahra</b></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> <b>Director Planning &amp; Development or delegate nominated by the Chief Executive Officer</b></p>	Memorandum of Understanding (the Charter)	<p><b>11 May 2023</b></p> <p><b>22 June 2023</b></p> <p><b>27 July 2023</b></p> <p><b>24 August 2023</b></p> <p><b>14 September 2023</b></p> <p><b>19 October 2023</b></p> <p><b>23 November 2023</b></p> <p><b>14 December 2023.</b></p> <p><b>2024 meeting dates to be confirmed.</b></p>



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<p><b><i>Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) (External)</i></b></p> <p>The VLGA promotes good governance and sustainability by supporting local governments and communities through programs of advocacy, training, information provision and support.</p> <p>Following the adoption of changes to the constitution in late 2018 all Councillors/Administrators from member Councils have voting rights.</p> <p>A Councillor/Administrator from a member Council may stand for election to the Committee of Management if they wish.</p>	Y	All Administrators	All Administrators	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution last updated in 2018	<i>Meets every third Thursday of every month from March to November at Pitcher Partners Level 13, 664 Collins Street, Docklands 6pm-8.30pm. The AGM is held late November.</i>
<p><b><i>Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) (Internal)</i></b></p> <p>The Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) is established to make recommendations to Council regarding acquisitions and deaccessions for the City of Whittlesea's Visual Art and Civic History Collections, as guided by the Visual Art and Civic History Collections Policy.</p>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate</p> <p>Change required to the Terms of reference to remove Administrator/Councillor representatives</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate</p> <p>Change required to the Terms of reference to remove Administrator/Councillor representatives</p>	Terms of reference adopted 2 July 2019.	<i>Meet twice a year.</i>

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<b>Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (External)</b>  <i>Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG)</i>	N	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate	Terms of Reference	<i>Tentatively bi-monthly with future meetings to be confirmed.</i>
<b>Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership (External)</b>  The Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership is a voluntary alliance of 59 organisations including the City of Whittlesea, State and Federal Government and Human Service Organisations, working together with shared commitments and goals for the benefit of the local community.	N	<b>Chairperson:</b> Director Community Wellbeing	<b>Chairperson:</b> Director Community Wellbeing	Terms of Reference adopted by the Partnership, of which the City of Whittlesea is a member.	<i>Meetings are held quarterly.</i>
<b>Whittlesea Courthouse Association (External)</b>  The Association manages the historic courthouse building which also operated as a Visitor Information Centre.  <i>The Constitution outlines the Officers of the Association. It provides a clause for "An executive officer of the City of Whittlesea to be represented".</i>	N	<b>Officer:</b> Director Planning & Development or delegate <i>(Non voting rights)</i>	<b>Officer:</b> Director Planning & Development or delegate <i>(Non voting rights)</i>	Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution	<i>Meets fourth Wednesday of every month at 7pm at Whittlesea Courthouse.</i>

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<p><b>Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) (External)</b></p> <p>The WDN is an active network of residents with disabilities, carers and service providers who meet monthly to consider, advocate, advise and address issues for people with disabilities in the municipality.</p>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate (Non voting rights)</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate (Non voting rights)</p>	<p>Terms of Reference currently being redeveloped for the purpose of relaunching the network mid-2023.</p>	<p><i>Future dates to be determined.</i></p>
<p><b>Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC) (External)</b></p> <p>The WMCC enhances co-operation among the diverse communities and promotes a greater awareness of multicultural values and needs within the municipality. <b><i>The delegate is a member of the Committee but does not have voting rights.</i></b></p>	N	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or Delegate</p>	<p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate</p>	<p>Incorporated Association governed by its Constitution</p>	<p><b><i>Meets bi-monthly on Thursdays from 5.30pm – 7.30pm at Lalor Library, 2A May Road, Lalor</i></b></p>



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<p><b>Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal)</b></p> <p>The Group commenced in 2001 as a community based committee to be a key reference group for Council on the continuing reconciliation process and to foster understanding of historical, cultural and contemporary issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p><b><i>This is a key reference group for Council.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The delegate is a member with voting rights.</i></b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan (Member with voting rights)</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Administrator Duncan (Member with voting rights)</p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate</p>	Terms of Reference adopted by the Council on 7 February 2018.	<b>Meetings to be held on Thursday from 6-8pm.</b>
<p><b>Whittlesea Showground and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management (External)</b></p> <p>This Committee provides an oversight or coordination role for the various users of the Crown land parcel centred on the Scrubby Creek and Plenty River and bisected by Yea Road in Whittlesea. The Committee is responsible for the maintenance and safe provision of a range of public open space elements and activities within the reserve.</p>	N	<b>Officer:</b> Manager Maintenance & Operations	<b>Officer:</b> Manager Maintenance & Operations	Committee of Management under the control of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries	<b>Meets second Tuesday of every second month at 8pm</b>

ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b>City of Whittlesea Youth Advisory Committee (External)</b></p> <p>This newly established Council Advisory Committee provides opportunities for young people to participate and learn about civic and democratic processes and provides a mechanism for Council to receive advice and input from young people about youth-specific issues. It provides a formal means for interaction and mutual information sharing between Council and young people, allowing young people to identify and advocate for issues of importance to them, and provide for an increased level of civic participation, to have a voice and influence as part of the political process.</p>	N	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or Delegate	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate	Terms of Reference adopted by the Council on 5 April 2021	<i>Meetings are held at 6.00pm-8.00pm on Mondays quarterly.</i>
<p><b>Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group (WYC) (External)</b></p> <p>The Group helps young people to develop a sense of connectedness within their communities via youth programs and events, community and social planning, information and referral services and support to the Whittlesea Youth Network.</p> <p><b><i>The WYC is not a decision making body and therefore no voting rights are required.</i></b></p>	N	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or Delegate	<b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing or delegate	No Statement of Purpose formalised. Is not an incorporated body but operates under the auspices of RMIT.	<i>Meets six times per year (February-December) on a Thursday at 1pm-2.30pm at The Lakes P-9 School, South Morang.</i>

ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE	ADMINISTRATOR AS DELEGATE ONLY AS PER CONSTITUTION OR TERMS OF REFERENCE? Y/N	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 18 APRIL 2023	APPOINTED COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR PERIOD 19 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2024	CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE HELD	MEETING DATES
<p><b>Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External)</b></p> <p>The Board has responsibility for the provision and management of the library service and comprises two representatives from each of the three member Councils - Whittlesea, Banyule and Nillumbik.</p> <p><b>Meetings of the Board are governed by its constitution which provides for two persons from each of the three member Councils to be on the Board. One person must be a Councillor while the second appointee can be any other person. The delegates have voting rights.</b></p>	Y	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council – Administrator Wilson <i>(Delegate with voting Rights)</i></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing</p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> Manager Active &amp; Creative Communities</p>	<p><b>Delegate:</b> Chair of Council – Administrator Wilson <i>(Delegate with voting Rights)</i></p> <p><b>Officer:</b> Director Community Wellbeing</p> <p><b>Substitute:</b> Manager Active &amp; Creative Communities</p>	Agreement under section 196 of the Local Government Act 1989 (as amended)	<p><b>Meeting will be held on Thursday 27 April 2023, 22 June, 24 August, 26 October and 14 December 2023 commencing at 6pm at various locations.</b></p>

**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

**8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update****9 Confidential Business****9.0.0 Close Meeting to the Public**

Under section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a meeting considering confidential information may be closed to the public. Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**Recommendation**

**THAT the Chair of Council recommends that the meeting be closed to the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following confidential matters in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as detailed.**

**9.1 Confidential Connected Communities**

No Reports

**9.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods**

No Reports

**9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy**

No Reports

**9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment**

No Reports

**9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation****9.5.1 Sale of Property under Section 181 of the Local Government Act**

This report and attachment have been designated as confidential in accordance with sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs. In particular the report and attachment contains information regarding property addresses, property ownership and outstanding property debt including rates and charges.

**10 Closure**