

City of Whittlesea

DRAFT COMMUNITY PLAN

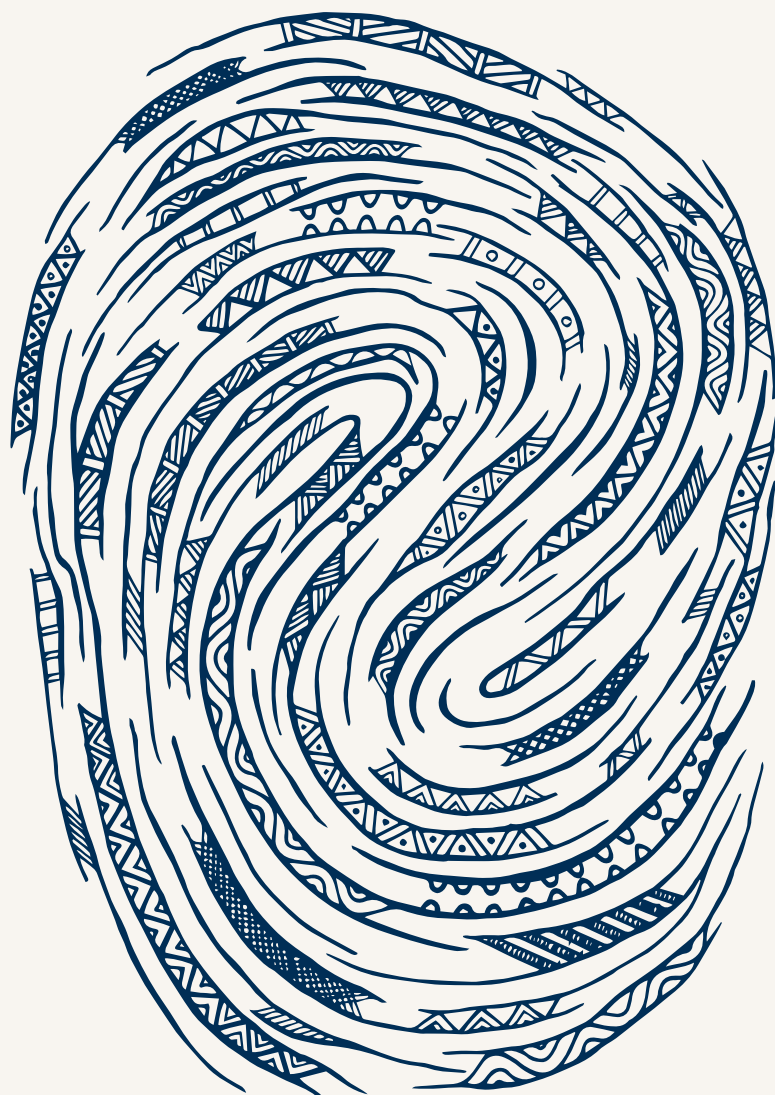
2025 – 2029

*Incorporating the Public Health and
Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan*



City of
Whittlesea

Whittlesea
2040
A place for all



Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017

Acknowledgement

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.

The lands along the Birrarung River and its tributaries –the Merri, Edgars and Darebin Creeks and the Plenty River were home to the Wurundjeri Willum and Taungurung Peoples. These lands offered more than just sustenance; they provided fresh water, food, shelter and a thriving environment rich with fish and birdlife.

For countless generations, these lands and waterways were not only places of living, but of gathering. Cultural ceremonies, trade and important business were conducted at sacred sites –places that continue to hold deep cultural and spiritual significance today. More than seventy of these sites remain in the City of Whittlesea, along with many scarred trees, standing as living testaments to an enduring connection to Country.

In acknowledging this heritage, we honour the knowledge, resilience and custodianship of the Traditional Owners, whose care for this land stretches back tens of thousands of years and continues today.

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Welcome to your Community Plan

Councillor Message

It is with great pride that we present the **Community Plan 2025–2029** our shared commitment to creating *A place for all*.

This plan reflects the hopes, priorities and aspirations of the people who call our community home.

This Community Plan is a plan for everyone; no matter your age, background or stage of life. Whether you're growing up here, raising a family, running a business, settling into retirement, or simply going about your everyday life, this plan is about supporting you to live well in the City of Whittlesea.

We are pleased to present our plan to you in 12 themes that reflect different aspects of community life from feeling safe and connected, to getting around more easily, enjoying our natural environment, and being able to participate fully in community life.

It is our hope that every person in our community can see through these themes how this plan relates to them and how it will support them to thrive.

It showcases the everyday ongoing work of Council and sets out how we will be delivering the services, projects and programs that matter most to you over the next four years. In addition, it commits to 55 meaningful initiatives across our key themes to deliver impactful and meaningful change.

More than 1,000 community members generously shared their time, ideas and experiences through surveys, pop-up sessions and focus groups to help shape this plan.

You told us safer roads, better transport and connected footpaths, beautiful parks, playgrounds and open spaces for everyone to enjoy and welcoming community facilities that bring people together are most important to you. Thanks to your voices, we've shaped a Community Plan for 2025–2029 that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

Grounded in both your feedback and local data, the plan also responds to some of our community's most urgent challenges. It focuses on preventing violence, supporting physical and mental wellbeing, addressing homelessness and breaking down barriers to employment, access and participation.

This Community Plan is our Council Plan and is our key strategic document. It includes the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Disability Action Plan. It outlines our vision, goals and initiatives for the next four years. It guides our priorities and actions in alignment with the needs of the community and sets the direction for Council's work and partnerships.

We are proud to bring together all of the work of Council including health, wellbeing and disability inclusion into one clear and coordinated roadmap for action.

Council is united in our commitment to delivering this plan during our term and reporting back regularly on our progress.

Together, we are working towards a more connected, inclusive and vibrant community where everyone belongs, everyone matters and everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



I love the area and want it to thrive as a business district with a happy, healthy and connected community proud of where they live.
– Cr Nic Brooks



I am passionate about supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people, ensuring the City of Whittlesea continues to have thriving, engaged and connected families.
– Cr Blair Colwell



As our region develops, we need essential infrastructure to support growth.
– Cr Lawrie Cox



I want the City of Whittlesea to work efficiently for residents and become the city of choice for people to live in.
– Cr Deb Gunn



I care about our community and I have seen the area change from farms to the busy growth corridor it is today.
– Cr Christine Stow



The City of Whittlesea has incredible opportunities going forward and we need to ensure we make the most of them.
– Cr Jarrod Lappin



I'm passionate about building a connected, inclusive community and making the City of Whittlesea a safe, thriving, vibrant and welcoming place for all who call it home.
– Cr David Lenberg



I am dedicated to working towards a vibrant and inclusive future for the City of Whittlesea.
– Cr Martin Taylor



By working together, we can build a brighter future for our kids, one that is full of opportunities and a sense of belonging.
– Cr Daniela Zinni

Local government and what we do

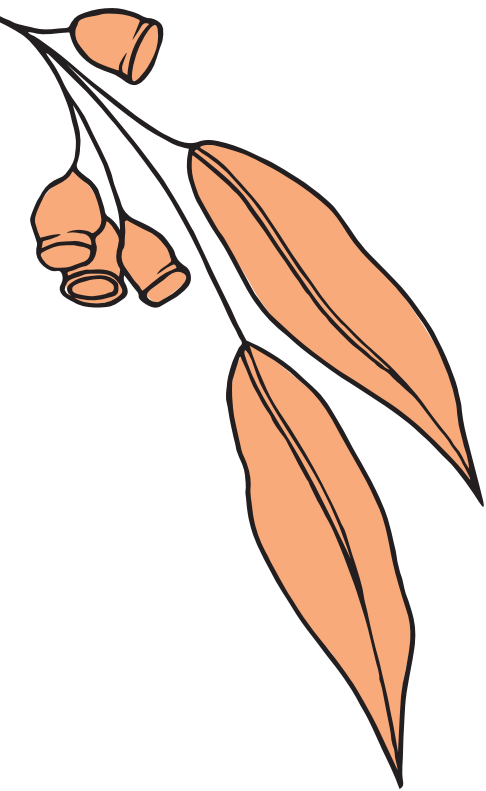
As the level of government closest to the community, local government plays a vital role in delivering services, facilities and programs that reflect the unique needs and aspirations of local people.

From parks and sporting grounds to waste collection and planning decisions, councils ensure public resources and infrastructure are shaped by, and work for, the communities they serve.

Local government also strengthens democracy by giving people meaningful opportunities to engage, contribute and influence decisions that shape their neighbourhoods. Councillors are elected to represent local interests, set the Council's strategic direction and advocate for the issues that matter most to residents and businesses. Their role is to ensure that services, priorities and policies reflect community needs and values.

The City of Whittlesea is represented by 11 Councillors, elected for a four-year term. Each year, a Mayor and Deputy Mayor are chosen from within the group to lead its work and serve as spokespersons.

Council staff, led by the Chief Executive Officer, are responsible for implementing Council decisions. They manage daily operations, deliver services and programs, and oversee the planning and delivery of projects that support the wellbeing and quality of life of everyone in the City of Whittlesea.



Our story

Our distinctive landscape

The City of Whittlesea is shaped by a rich and diverse landscape, sitting across two major geological regions of Victoria. The south and west of the municipality lie on the volcanic Eastern Plains, while the north and east are part of the older Eastern Uplands.

The steep slopes of the Great Dividing Range mark the north, and the striking Granite Hills and Quarry Hills rise through the centre. Flowing through the municipality from north to south are key waterways; the Plenty River, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek and Edgars Creek, fed by smaller creeks and tributaries. These waterways, along with our majestic River Red Gums, form a defining part of our natural environment.

Aboriginal cultural landscape

Aboriginal people have lived in Victoria for at least 35,000 years. The Wurundjeri Willum clan of the Kulin Nations are the Traditional Owners of most of the area now known as the City of Whittlesea, with a smaller section in the northeast of deep cultural significance to the Taungurung People.

Thousands of archaeological sites across the city, including artefact scatters, hearths, scarred trees and ancestral burial sites, tell the deep story of First Nations peoples' connection to Country. Their relationship with the land is ongoing, guided by spiritual, cultural and seasonal cycles and underpinned by strong family and community ties.

Historic cultural period

European exploration began in the 1820s and 1830s along the Merri Creek. By 1838, the Whittlesea and Geelong areas were among the first in Victoria to be subdivided for land sales. In 1837, George Sherwin established a sheep station in Upper Plenty, and the township of Whittlesea was surveyed in 1853. The Plenty and Merri valleys became thriving centres for agriculture, from wheat and flour in the 1860s to large-scale milk production. A rail line connected Whittlesea to Melbourne from 1889 until 1959.

Westgarthtown was established by German Wendish settlers in the 1850s, with a Lutheran church and cemetery still standing today. The Yan Yean Reservoir, completed in 1857, was a major engineering feat, supplying water to Melbourne. Dry stone walls, many still standing between Epping, Wollert and Donnybrook, reflect the farming and grazing heritage of the area.

Growth, diversity and our future

Post-World War Two, suburbs like Thomastown and Lalor became home to new migrant communities. Since the 1980s, government planning has guided growth across Mernda, Doreen, Epping North, Wollert and Donnybrook. Our population has more than doubled since 2001 and remains one of Victoria's most diverse, with 45% speaking a language other than English at home.

As we grow, we continue to protect what makes Whittlesea unique; its environment, heritage and people, while finding new ways to build a sustainable, inclusive future.

Our municipality

The City of Whittlesea is located in Melbourne's northern suburbs, about 20 kilometres from the city centre. It is one of Melbourne's largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490 square kilometres. A city in its own right, with a thriving and growing economic base, it includes rural areas to the north, the emerging neighbourhoods and suburbs in the greenfield areas and the established suburbs to the south.





Quick facts about the City of Whittlesea

People



Our population continues to grow

A population of
257,000 in 2025, projected to be
355,000 by 2040 – a 38% increase.¹



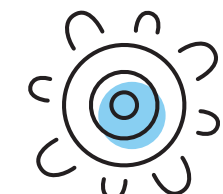
We're home to many young families

54% of households are families with children. **27%** of the population is under 19.³



We have a growing older population

17% of our population is over 60.¹
Our median age is expected to shift
from 35 to 39 by 2040.⁴



We have a growing
First Peoples population

38% increase from 2016 to 2021²



We're a diverse and multicultural community

37.6% of residents were born overseas²
and **45%** speak a language other
than English at home.²



Discrimination is impacting the lives
of many in our community

More than half of First Peoples and
culturally and linguistically diverse residents
have experienced racism⁵. **1 in 10** Australians
experience discrimination because
of a disability.

¹ Population projections for City of Whittlesea from .id, 2024

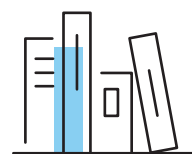
² ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2021

³ Population forecast, Place Info Pty Ltd, 2025

⁴ Population forecast, Place Info Pty Ltd, 2025

⁵ City of Whittlesea Anti-racism community Project,
Vic Uni, 2022

Health and wellbeing



Our residents seek out ways to engage and connect

our libraries had more than
half a million visits in 2023-24,
94,000 people attended community events
10,000+ people played sport at Council facilities.



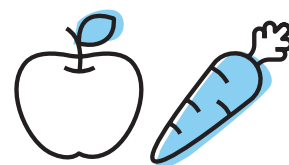
Our physical activity levels
are comparatively low

32% of residents meet global
physical activity guidelines.⁶



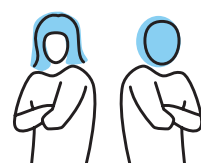
Demand for mental
health support is rising

Almost **1 in 5**
residents over the
age of 18 sought
professional mental
health support in 2023⁷



Healthy food intake is insufficient for many

15.9% of residents consume take away food
at least once a week. Most residents (**66%**) consume
at least one or two servings of fruit daily,
only **6%** of residents meet the recommended daily
intake of 5 serves or more of vegetables.⁹



Some households are
experiencing family violence

1,149 family violence incidents
were reported per 100,000
people in 2023-24, a **6.8%**
increase compared to 2022-23.¹⁰



Gambling losses are significant

On average, **\$2.6 million**
is lost per week on Electronic
Gaming Machines.¹¹



More people are experiencing homelessness

People sleeping rough and experiencing
homelessness has increased by
150% over the last 20 years.¹²



Demand for inclusive programs
and participation is increasing

The most common social activities
where people with disability face barriers are:

Socialising in someone else's home: **43.2%**

Visiting a restaurant, café, bar, club: **35.7%**

Participating in sports, recreation and exercise: **34.3%**

⁶ North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p150

⁷ North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p132

⁸ North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p167

⁹ City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.3, 2024

¹⁰ Crime Statistics Agency, Family Violence Dashboard, 2024

¹¹ VGCCC, Monthly LGA EGM Expenditure, Monthly expenditure data by Local Government Area (LGA) - Report | vgccc.vic.gov.au

¹² Census 2006 and Census 2021

Housing and transport



Housing growth is continuing

In 2040, it is estimated there will
be around **134,000** dwellings,
a **43%** increase from 2025.¹³



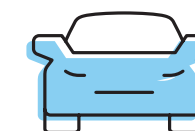
Demand for affordable housing is growing

In 2024 there was an estimated shortage of
more than **4000** affordable homes.¹⁴



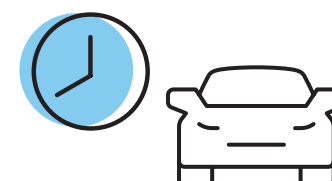
We have a wide range of
neighbourhood types

Old areas built in the **1950s-60s**
through to new communities being
built in our growth areas, as well as
green wedge suburbs and farmland.



Most people travel by car

76% of people travel
to work by car¹⁶



Many people have long commutes to work

Nearly **30%** of working residents spend
more than an hour getting to and from
work and **7%** spend more than
two hours commuting.¹⁷



Not all venues and facilities are
accessible by all ages and abilities

In 2018, **30%** of working age people
with a disability affecting mobility or
communication, had difficulty accessing
public buildings or facilities.¹⁸

¹³ Dwelling Projections for City of Whittlesea, from .id, 2024

¹⁴ Affordable Housing Need, compiled by .id, 2024

¹⁵ Affordable Housing Need, compiled by .id, 2024

¹⁶ City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.1, 2024

¹⁷ City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.2, 2024

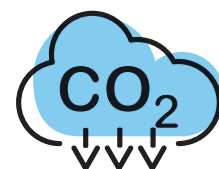
¹⁸ AIHW, People with and Disability in Australia, 2018.

Environment



More waste is being diverted from landfill

Tonnes of garbage increased by **2%** between 2019-20 and 2023-24, lower than the population increase of just over **8%**.



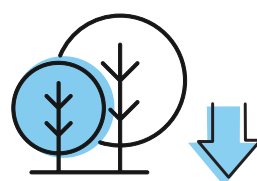
Greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality have decreased

1.6 million tonnes of carbon emissions in 2022-23, down from **1.9 million** in 2018-19



Climate events are becoming more frequent and severe

Since 2000, heatwaves have **tripled** across Australia, the intensity of rain downpours has increased, bushfire seasons are more intense and sea levels have risen.²¹



Tree coverage is low in urban areas

In established suburbs tree cover varies from **7 - 11%**. In growth areas the canopy cover is significantly lower – as low as **6%**.²²



About half our people have close access to parks and open space

The proportion of dwellings located within 400m of a large park increased from **48%** (2021) to **53%** (2024).²³

¹⁹ City of Whittlesea, Waste Team, 2025

²⁰ CO2e stands for "carbon dioxide equivalent". It is a way to measure the total impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming

²¹ State of the Climate 2022, Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO

²² Greening Whittlesea Strategy 2020-2040, 2021

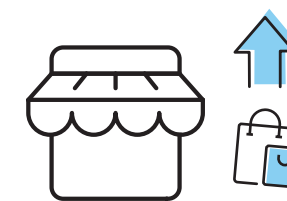
²³ Australian Urban Observatory, City of Whittlesea Liveability Index Scorecard, 2021 and 2024.

Economy



We have a broad range of retail and service precincts

More than **60** retail precincts ranging from regional level to strip shops.



The number of local businesses is growing

22,808 businesses in 2024, a **35%** increase since 2016.²⁴



The number of local jobs is increasing

Almost **82,000** local jobs in 2022-23, a **19%** increase since 2017-18.²⁵



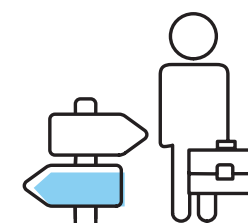
The highest employing sectors are

Healthcare and Social Assistance: **17.8%**

Construction: **13.4%**

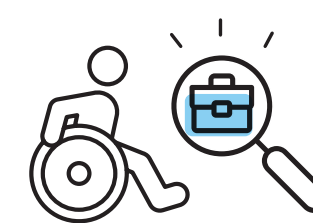
Retail: **11.5%**

Manufacturing: **11.1%**²⁶



Many residents work outside the municipality

63% of working residents commute to other areas.²⁷



A comparatively higher proportion of residents with a disability are unemployed

The number of residents with daily support needs not in the labour force increased by **24%** between 2016 and 2024.²⁸

²⁴ ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses, including entries and exits, compiled by .id, 2024

²⁵ NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy .id by .id

²⁶ NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy .id by .id

²⁷ NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy.id by .id



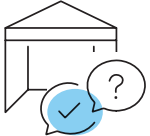
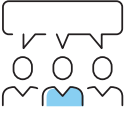



²⁸ ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .id

Community voices have shaped this plan

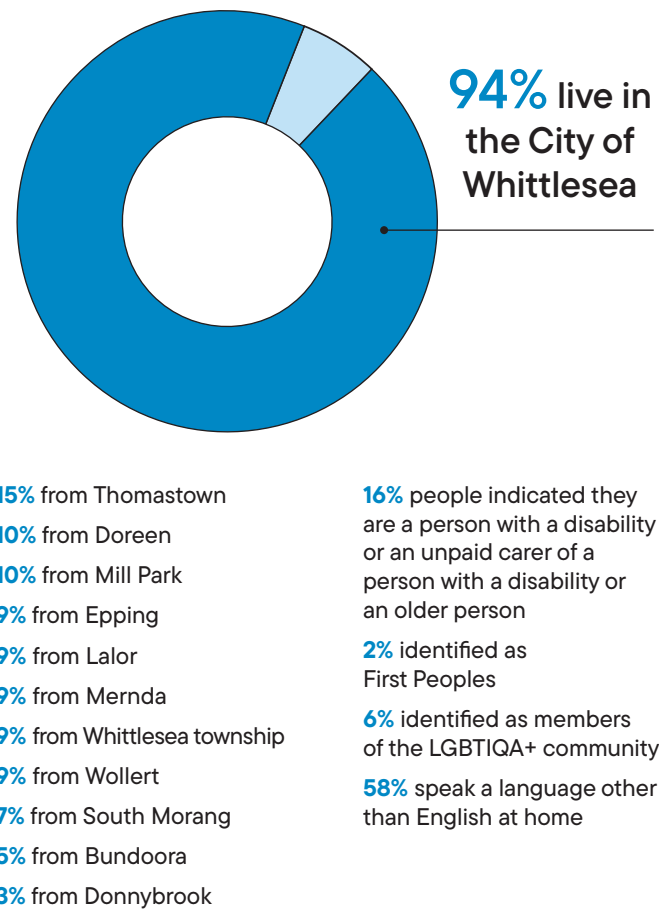
In 2024 and early 2025, we invited our community to dream big and share what matters most for the future of the City of Whittlesea. More than 1,339 people took part; online, in person and through focus groups, offering their ideas, hopes and priorities for the years ahead.

4,181 community comments helped shape this plan

How we engaged

-  **793** in-person surveys completed in person
-  **Engagement activities at community events**
-  **20 pop-up engagement stalls** across the municipality including Bundoora, Donnybrook, Doreen, Epping, Lalor, Mernda, Mill Park, South Morang, Thomastown and Whittlesea township
-  **Community focus groups** across the municipality in Lalor, South Morang and Whittlesea township held with representative cohorts
-  **504 surveys** completed online at engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au
-  **Workshops and meeting with key stakeholders**
-  **Multi-channel communications campaign**

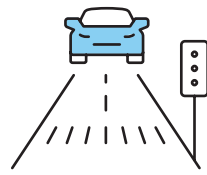
Of those who participated in community engagement:



Whittlesea 2040 –
"A place for all."



What you told us was important to you



Roads, transport and footpaths

You told us that maintaining and renewing local roads and shared paths is a top concern. Just as important are road safety, traffic management, better transport planning, public transport advocacy, parking, cycling infrastructure and the creation of new shared paths to help people stay connected.



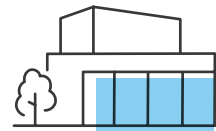
Parks, playgrounds and open space

You also shared how much you value access to green spaces and play areas. You want to see new playgrounds developed, older ones renewed and our much-loved parks and open spaces maintained. Some local favourites you mentioned include Mill Park All Abilities Playspace, Whittlesea Public Gardens, Quarry Hills and Redleap Recreation Reserve including Peter Hopper Lake.



Health and Wellbeing

You told us improving mental wellbeing and social connection was the highest health priority, with 46% ranking it in their top three. For the Disability Action Plan the top priority was increasing services to enable safe and independent living, with 67% ranking it in their top three.



Community facilities

Sporting and aquatic facilities are important to you, closely followed by libraries and community activity centres; places that bring people together, support wellbeing and foster connection.



Community safety

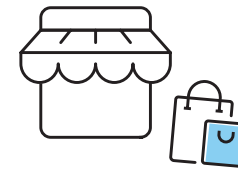
You want us to prioritise safety. Lighting, education and enforcement of local laws were key themes, along with strong support for programs that prevent violence against women, supporting safer school crossings and providing immunisation services.



Arts, culture and events

You told us that arts, culture and celebrations make our city vibrant and inclusive. PRACC (Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre) stood out as a much-valued facility, along with festivals and events like the Community Festival, Walking Thomastown and Carols by Candlelight. You also expressed a desire for more public art, creative workshops and consideration of a dedicated community art gallery.

Other important priorities included:



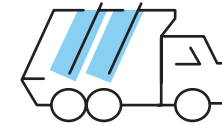
Support for local business

You highlighted the need for strong support for local businesses, investment in retail and activity centres and a focus on boosting our visitor and night-time economy.



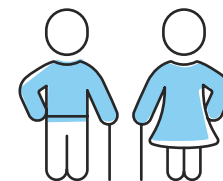
Youth services

Our young people and their families prioritised more social and recreational opportunities like movie nights, youth takeover nights and karaoke. Programs that support leadership and personal development such as the Young Women's Leadership Program and teen Mental Health First Aid were also seen as important.



Waste management

You want to see a strong focus on recycling, managing dumped rubbish, hard waste collections and kerbside services, along with more education and awareness about how we can all reduce waste.



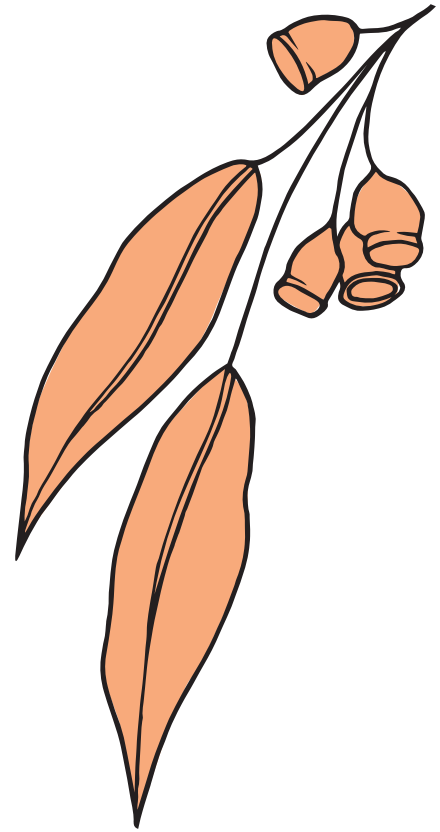
Ageing well

You told us that home care services including domestic assistance, delivered meals and personal care are vital. Just as important is helping older residents stay socially connected through positive ageing programs, seniors' clubs and social support.



Housing Diversity and Affordability

You told us you want increased availability of affordable, accessible, and diverse housing options that are well-located near services, employment opportunities, and community facilities.



Community Vision

Whittlesea 2040

A place for all

Our community vision, **Whittlesea 2040: A place for all**, reflects the hopes and aspirations of our diverse community. First shaped through extensive consultation in 2017–2018 and reviewed again in 2025, it continues to guide our planning and priorities, ensuring we remain focused on what matters most to our residents now and into the future.

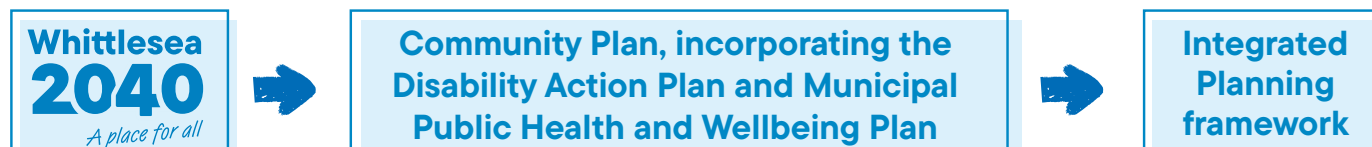
This vision paints a picture of a compassionate and inclusive community where people feel supported, connected and proud to call the City of Whittlesea home. It's a place where the simple things matter - feeling safe, knowing your neighbours, or having work and services close by. Whether you've lived here for generations or recently arrived, the City of Whittlesea is a welcoming city where everyone belongs and contributes to a shared future.

The Whittlesea 2040 vision is built around five key goals: a connected community, liveable neighbourhoods, a strong local economy, a sustainable environment, and a high-performing organisation. These goals underpin everything we do and provide a clear direction for the years ahead.

This Community Plan 2025–2029 brings that vision to life. It outlines how Council will deliver services, projects and programs that respond directly to the needs of our growing and changing municipality.

Developed through extensive engagement and grounded in local data, the plan also integrates our Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan ensuring our work supports health, inclusion and equity for all.

As we look to the future, we are committed to building neighbourhoods that are vibrant, green and accessible. We'll continue supporting people at every stage of life whether that's staying active as we age, helping children thrive, improving how we get around, or creating opportunities to connect, participate and belong.



Our priority areas for health and wellbeing and disability inclusion

Council plays a vital role in protecting and enhancing community health and wellbeing under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. To keep health and wellbeing at the core of our work, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan is embedded within this Community Plan.

In line with our commitment to equity and inclusion, we have also embedded the Disability Action Plan to ensure everyone in our community has the opportunity to participate fully and thrive.

We have identified six health and wellbeing priority areas and four disability inclusion priority areas. The priorities have been informed by community voices, local data and the key challenges facing our municipality. In shaping these priorities, we considered the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027, the State Disability Plan 2022–2026, the Victorian Climate Change Act 2017, and the findings of the 2016 Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The health and wellbeing and disability action priorities are outlined below and integrated throughout the Community Plan and identified with icons. More information about how we arrived at these is outlined in Appendix 4.



Appendix 4

Health and wellbeing priority areas

- 1. Advance gender equality and prevention of gendered violence** by addressing its root causes, challenging harmful gendered norms, and supporting safe, respectful communities.
- 2. Help protect community health in a changing climate** by supporting people to stay safe, well and prepared during events like heatwaves, floods and bushfires.
- 3. Enhance mental health and social connection by:**
 - a. providing programs and facilities that offer safe, welcoming spaces for people to come together and build community; and
 - b. awareness-raising, reduce gambling harm to give people back time, resources, and space to connect, feel supported, and take part in community life.
- 4. Improve access to healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food** by supporting local food programs and providers.
- 5. Support and promote active lifestyles** by providing a range of programs and creating spaces that increase participation and support people to be more physically active.
- 6. Enhance homelessness prevention** by advocating for and supporting programs that provide stable housing solutions and assistance to people at risk or without secure housing.

Priority areas for disability inclusion and equity

- 1. Deliver and facilitate fair and equitable access to local services and facilities** by eliminating and preventing physical, economic, attitudinal, technological and communication barriers.
- 2. Support access to meaningful and sustained local job opportunities** by building awareness, facilitating training and providing support and advice around identification, reduction and removal of barriers.
- 3. Support equal participation** by creating inclusive programs and spaces where everyone can be involved
- 4. Drive real change in discriminatory attitudes and behaviours** by promoting respect, inclusion, and greater understanding across the community.



Themes

We are pleased to present our Community Plan to you in 12 themes that reflect different aspects of community life.

Each theme starts with a simple question that reflects a real need or concern from our community -for example, *How will you help me stay active? How will you support my child to thrive? or How will you make sure our neighbourhood is clean and welcoming?* These questions have guided how we've shaped our priorities, so the actions we take speak directly to the everyday experiences of the people who live, work, study and visit here.

The plan also recognises that no two people are the same. We've made sure it considers the unique experiences of different groups in our community including older

people, young people, people with disability, multicultural communities, First Nations people, families, carers and business owners. It responds to our health and wellbeing and disability action priorities and draws on community insight and local data to make sure we're not only meeting current needs, but also planning for the future.

Together, these themes form a blueprint for how we will work with you to make the City of Whittlesea a more connected, inclusive, sustainable and vibrant place for all.

Council's role

This is Council's plan for the community and the goals and strategic priorities that will deliver on the Community vision. However, Council cannot do it alone. We have many partners that work to make a difference in our community, including the Victorian and Australian Governments, private industry, health providers, education providers, community organisations, clubs and groups. Council's role in delivering on community needs varies depending on regulatory and legislative responsibilities, land ownership, funding, resourcing capacity and expertise required. Council has seven different roles:



Deliverer/provider/partner:

Council directly delivers services and infrastructure, either on its own, or in partnership with other levels of government, the community or private organisations.



Regulator/statutory authority/monitor:

Council enforces laws, policies and regulations that maintain public safety, health, and wellbeing.



Funder/enabler:

Council provides financial and/or in-kind support to organisations that are better positioned to manage or deliver specific services or infrastructure.



Facilitator:

Council facilitates partnerships, connects stakeholders and ensures that local needs are heard and addressed.



Planner:

Council develops and implements plans that ensure sustainable, well-organised and quality growth and change in the community. This includes land use, housing, transport, town centres, business precincts and community facilities.



Advocate:

Council represents the interests of the community to other levels of government, or other stakeholders. This could involve making the case and negotiating funding, policy changes, or programs that benefit the local community.

THEME 1 :
As I get older,
I want to
maintain my
independence.
How will you
support me
in this?

Our ongoing work

We provide services to enable older adults to remain in their own homes and communities.

- Deliver home support services to enable individuals to live independently, including assistance with household chores, shopping, personal care, social connection, food delivery and home maintenance.

We deliver programs for older adults to support their independence, connection with community and wellbeing.

- Deliver, support and facilitate a range of regular programs to support social connection, mental wellbeing and creative expression.
- Facilitate intergenerational engagement opportunities, such as connecting community playgroups with aged care services.
- Deliver quarterly bus tours to showcase local services and infrastructure to new and existing older residents.

We support seniors’ groups to promote active participation of older adults within the community.

- Provide senior citizen clubs with grants to support their operations and provide regular training, advice and support.
- Facilitate and subsidise facility hire for seniors’ groups in Council-owned community and sporting facilities.



Community quote:

“Strong social connections reduce loneliness and isolation, and mental wellbeing helps to make life bigger not smaller and helps you to thrive not just survive.”

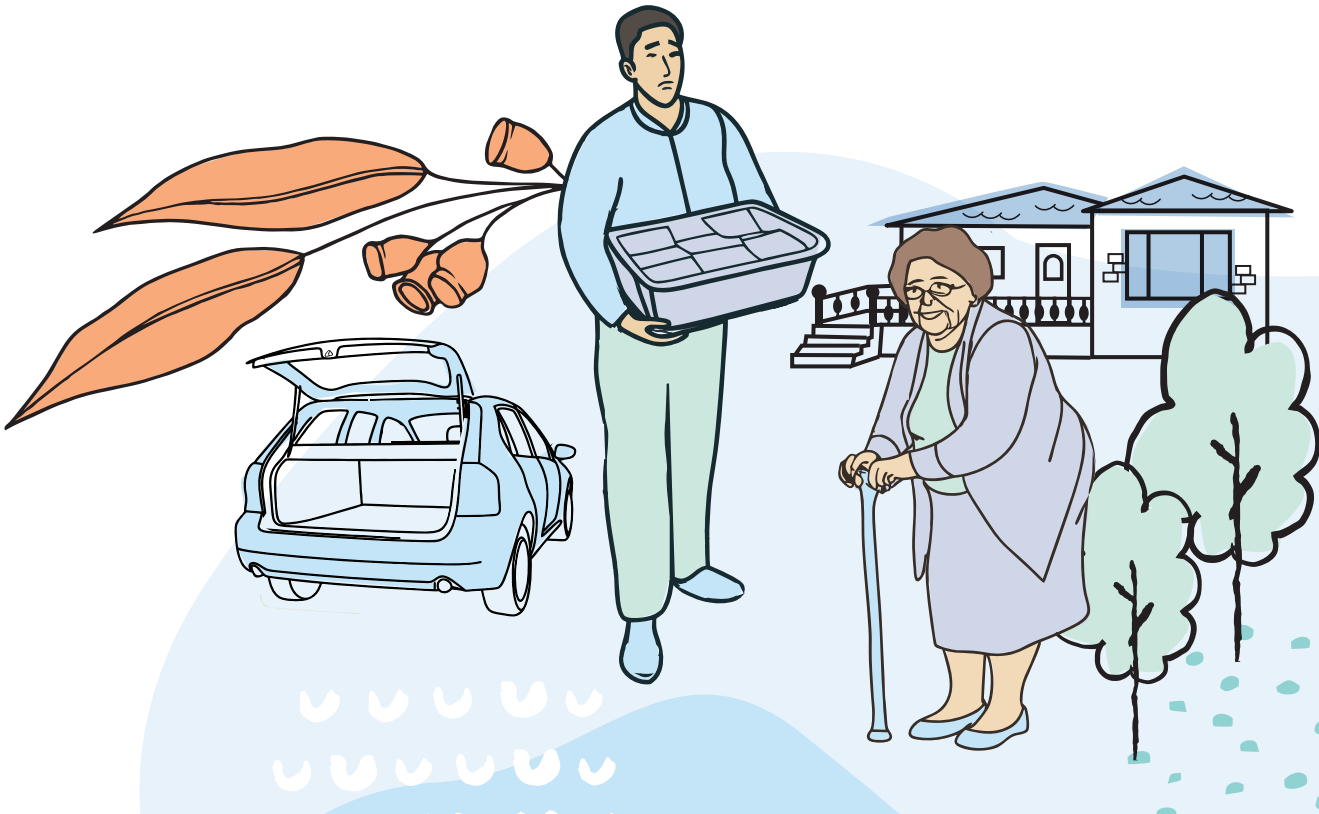
Strategic Priority

SP1	Deliver and facilitate expansion of programs and services that keep older residents independent, connected and supported close to home.	HP
SP2	Deliver the commencement of Home Care Packages to help older residents stay in their own homes, live independently and enjoy a high quality of life as their needs change.	HP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Aged care facilities	Private or not-for-profit providers
Aged care assessments	Private and public health organisations
Emergency planning for older Australians	Australian Red Cross



THEME 2:

I'm a parent or carer. How will you help children thrive through different life stages?



Our ongoing work

We facilitate and support delivery of early childhood education, enhancing the learning, development and wellbeing of young children.

- Facilitate provision of kindergarten programs in Council-owned and maintained kindergarten buildings.
- Deliver the centralised kindergarten application and enrolment service to provide a single, central point of contact for families and kindergarten providers.
- Partner with early childhood services to reduce barriers that prevent families participating in early childhood education.
- Deliver an ongoing kindergarten bathroom upgrade program to ensure bathrooms and change facilities in Council-owned kindergartens are accessible and meet the needs of children.
- Deliver and facilitate a range of programs to engage children in learning, creative expression and building social skills.

We provide guidance on children's health and facilitate local care and support.

- Deliver Maternal and Child Health and supporting services, including consultations at different stages of a child's development, breastfeeding support, nutrition advice, health referrals, early parenting information and links to community resources and new parents' groups.
- Provide immunisation services for children under the age of 18 through public and school immunisation programs.
- Partner with local services to help connect families to health and support programs run by community health groups and other support services.

We support parents and caregivers by helping them feel confident, connected and equipped to raise healthy, happy children.

- Deliver training programs to support parents, caregivers and professionals in their role in caring for, educating and raising children and young people.
- Deliver targeted support to children and families facing additional challenges such as unstable housing, family violence, trauma or financial hardship to assist them to engage in early childhood education and health services.
- Deliver supported playgroups to help children and families doing it tough to connect with others, learn and get the help they need. Provide guidance and support to enable the community to confidently run and manage their own playgroups.

We support children approaching adolescence to build confidence and develop the skills they need to thrive as they approach their high school years.

- Deliver evidence-based programs, events and initiatives that respond to the current and emerging needs of middle years children (7–11) and young people (12–25). This includes opportunities for positive social connection, entertainment, community participation, developing new skills and the promotion of healthy and respectful relationships. This will be via school holiday programs, targeted leadership training sessions, music/art events and life skills workshops.
- Deliver education and parenting support programs for parents of middle years and young children through the Raising Children and Young People training and programs.

We support young people in their transition to adulthood by creating pathways to education, training and employment, strengthening life skills and championing youth voices and leadership.

- Support local services to provide opportunities for young people to re-engage with education and/or pathways to employment.
- Partner with other services to make it easier for young people to get the help they need, such as mental health support.
- Facilitate and support the Youth Council to continue to provide valuable advice on matters affecting young people and create opportunities for young people to engage with Council and have their voices heard.



Strategic Priority

SP3	Partner with the Victorian Government and stakeholders to implement the Best Start, Best Life Reform, including free kindergarten for 3- and 4-year-old children and extending kindergarten hours.	HP	DAP
SP4	Deliver and facilitate culturally safe services and programs for First Peoples children and their families, suited to local needs.	HP	DAP
SP5	Advocate for funding from other levels of government to establish a dedicated youth hub and create additional youth-friendly spaces where young people can thrive.	HP	DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Childcare centres and childcare provision	A range of private and not for profit providers
Community playgroups	Volunteers
Integrated family services	Not for profit providers (Berry Street, Kinds First) and Victorian Government funded The Orange Door

THEME 3:

I will have different transportation needs across my lifetime. How will you help me get around easily?

Our ongoing work

We plan, build and maintain local roads, paths, carparks and crossings, and advocate for timely and well-planned large-scale transport infrastructure such as highways, major roads, rail lines and public transport services.

- Deliver ongoing renewal and maintenance of Council-owned local roads, paths and bridges.
- Deliver and facilitate new safe transport networks in the growing areas of the City of Whittlesea to connect people to essential services and other parts of the community.
- Deliver and strategically manage car parking across the municipality to ensure safe streets, support economic activity in our town centres and high streets and balance the needs of residents and visitors.
- Advocate for timely transport infrastructure and maintenance for highways, major roads, rail lines and public transport services.

We implement and monitor safety measures within the local transport network to support safe travel for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

- Deliver measures to slow down traffic and check roads regularly to keep everyone safe.
- Deliver improved local traffic management solutions, including active travel options in neighbourhoods, to make it easier and safer around schools.
- Partner with industry to ensure safe and efficient movement on Council roads of traffic related to construction.

- Provide safe road crossings, signs, drinking fountains, seating, lighting and shade in busy transport areas to make walking and cycling easier, safer and more comfortable.
- Deliver the school crossing supervisor and the safe routes to school programs to ensure safe travel to school.
- Deliver and facilitate programs that help people get active through walking and cycling.

We deliver projects and programs to make transport inclusive and accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities, older adults, parents with prams and others who may face mobility challenges.

- Provide accessible parking spaces in convenient locations and issue permits for people with disabilities.
- Provide assistance to people with a disability to get to appointments or activities independently as part of the Home and Community Care for Younger People (HACCPYP) service.
- Deliver and facilitate improved disability access to public transport through an ongoing program of upgrades to bus stops, footpaths and pram crossings.
- Partner with the Whittlesea Disability Network to ensure that transport planning and infrastructure meet the needs of people with disabilities.

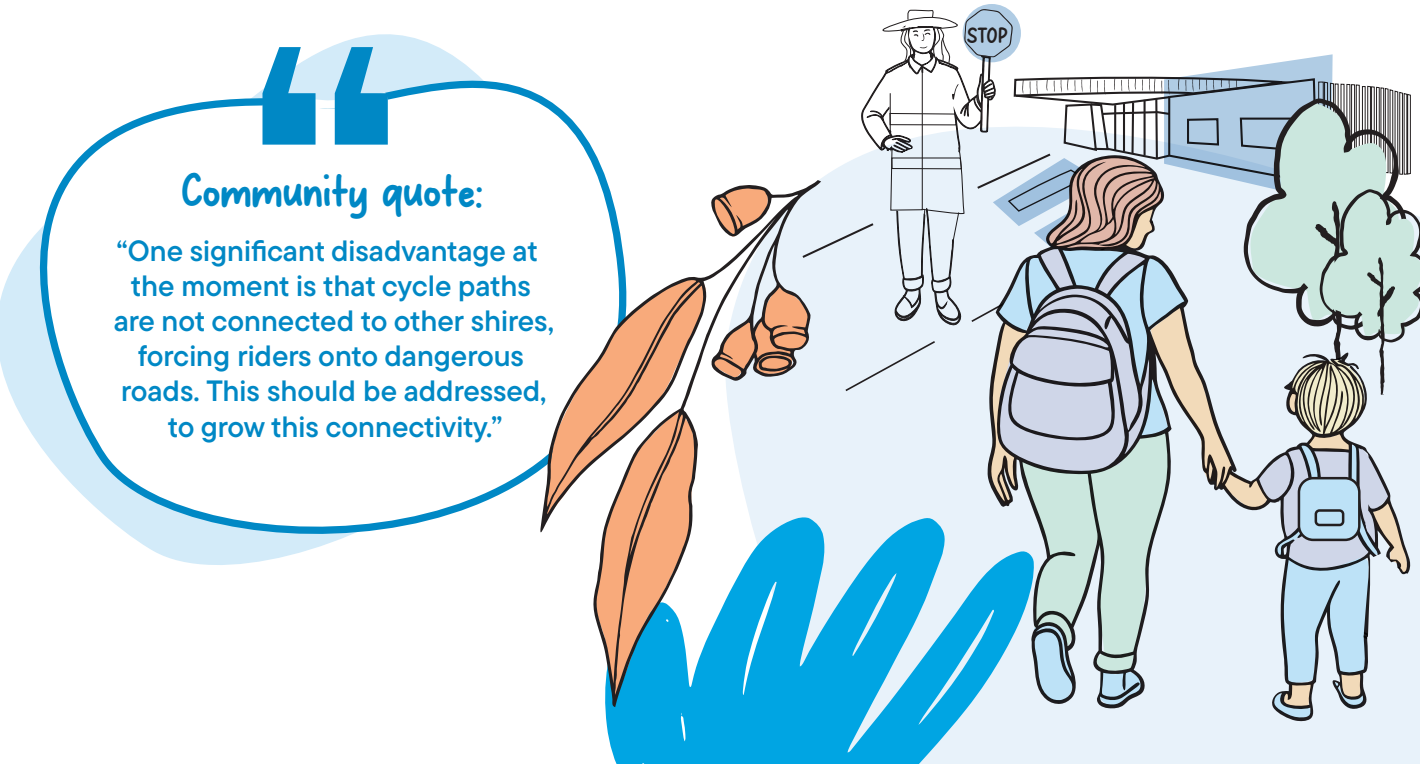
Strategic Priority

SP6	Deliver the Yan Yean Pipe Track and Edgars Creek Trail shared paths to increase recreation opportunities and sustainable transport options in line with the City of Whittlesea Walking and Cycling Plan and Northern Trails Strategy.	HPDAP
SP7	Deliver a Parking Policy to manage the allocation and regulation of parking, balancing the needs of all users while supporting Council’s safety, efficiency and environmental sustainability goals.	DAP
SP8	Advocate for expanded transportation options and improvements to the transport network, including road upgrades, enhanced shared pathways and increased public transport, such as the Wollert Rail.	HPDAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Construction and maintenance of freeways and arterial roads (arterial roads are the major connecting roads across the state)	Victorian Government
Construction and maintenance of footpaths, bridges and tracks on non-Council land	Victorian Government or private landowners
Delivery and management of public transport	Victorian Government
Road rules and speed enforcement	Victoria Police



THEME 4:

I want to protect the environment and be ready for a changing climate. How will you support our community and neighbourhood to be green and sustainable?

Our ongoing work

We protect and preserve natural areas such as bushland, waterways, parks, and wildlife habitats so that ecosystems stay healthy and communities can enjoy clean, green and nature-rich neighbourhoods.

- Deliver the maintenance of nature conservation reserves, waterways and roadsides to protect animals and plants and provide opportunities for the community to connect to nature.
- Monitor and protect local plants and animals on Council owned and managed land through regular surveys and wildlife management practices.
- Partner with local groups to bring cultural knowledge into land management and preservation practices.
- Deliver the protection of significant and heritage trees to preserve their history, cultural and environmental importance.
- Enforce building and land use rules to protect the environment and save water.
- Support water conservation and quality through monitoring, water management projects and planning waterway corridors, along with water-saving measures in new Council buildings and public spaces.
- Deliver ongoing monitoring and care for closed landfill sites to protect the surrounding environment.

We actively address climate change by reducing Council’s emissions and continuously enhancing the sustainability of our operations.

- Deliver a growing tree canopy cover across the municipality by planting new trees and caring for existing ones to reduce urban heat.
- Partner on regional climate action initiatives with a focus on carbon reduction and climate adaptation.
- Deliver continued reduction of Council’s carbon emissions, including converting Council facilities to all-electric and upgrading public streetlights.
- Plan for gas-to-electricity conversion at Council-owned aquatic centres to reduce carbon emissions, improve efficiency and reduce power costs.

We support the community to take local climate action, make sustainable choices and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.

- Deliver community education to raise awareness about the benefits of trees and canopy cover.
- Provide the community with tools and advice on living sustainably, adapting to climate change, responding to extreme heat and fire safety.
- Partner with local Landcare and ‘Friends of’ groups to help care for nature.
- Partner with other organisations to deliver bush kindergarten programs and pop-up bush playgroups.
- Provide guidance to those managing land in rural areas on best practices for sustainable land care and pest control for introduced species.

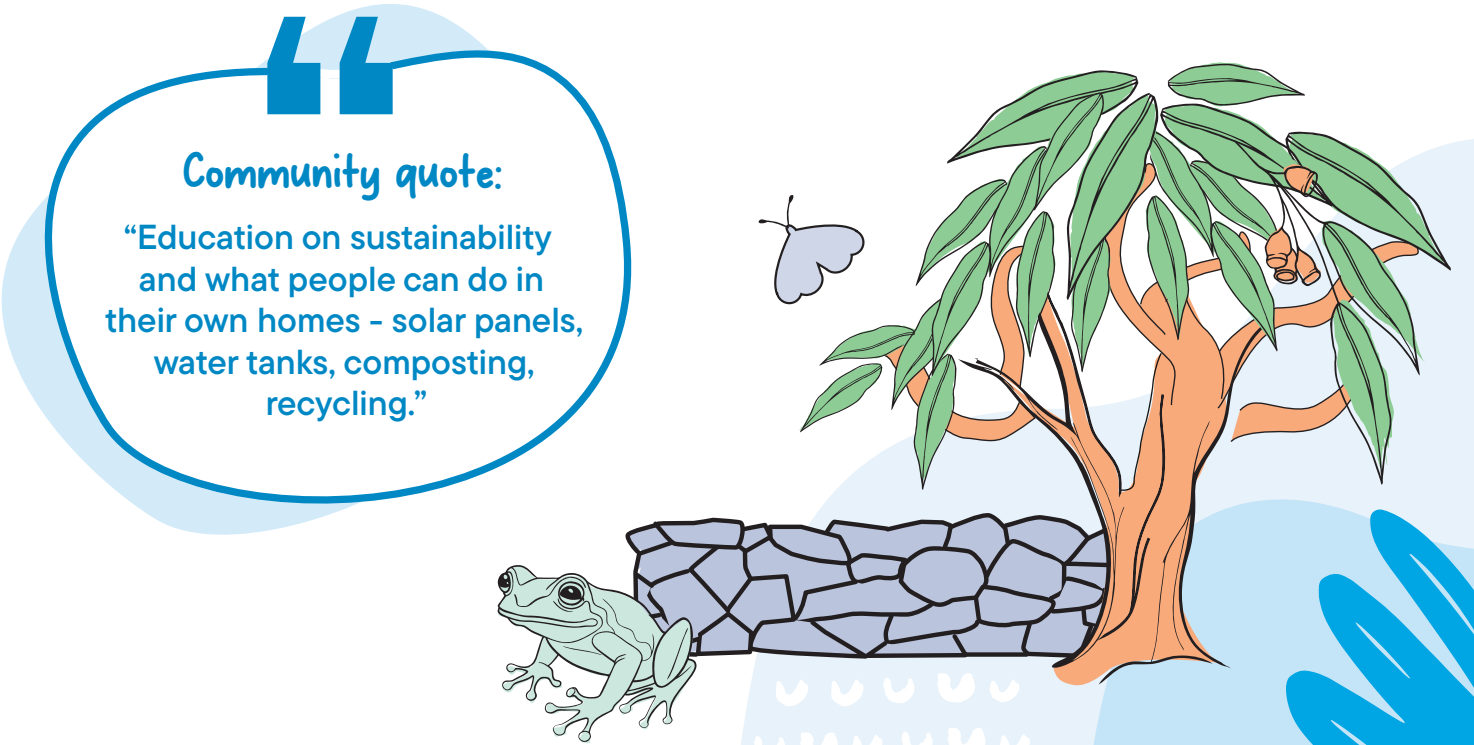
Strategic Priority

SP9	Deliver and advocate for initiatives that help people and businesses make homes and workplaces more comfortable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.	HP	DAP
SP10	Provide additional opportunities to generate local carbon offsets on Council owned and private land to help reduce municipal wide carbon emissions.	HP	DAP
SP11	Deliver the City Forest program, planting more than 60,000 trees and working towards a target of an additional tree per resident across the municipality, to increase canopy cover, decrease urban heat and enhance biodiversity.	HP	DAP
SP12	Deliver new stormwater harvesting at Council-owned sports fields and facilities to reduce potable water reliance, enhance water conservation and generate savings.	HP	DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Conservation management of State government owned land, such as the Plenty Gorge Parklands and Yan Yean Reservoir	Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Department of Environment, Energy, Water and Climate Action
Secure the Grassy Eucalypts Woodland Reserve within the Green Wedge	Department of Environment, Energy, Water and Climate Action
Continue to invest in home energy upgrades to support the thermal efficiency and comfort of our residents’ homes	Victorian Government, Australian Government



Community quote:

“Education on sustainability and what people can do in their own homes - solar panels, water tanks, composting, recycling.”

THEME 5:

I want our streets, neighbourhoods and waterways to be clean. How will you manage waste and encourage people to do the right thing?

Our ongoing work

We provide waste management services, including the collection, disposal and recycling of household and commercial waste.

- Deliver kerbside waste, recycling and organics collection services to comply with Victorian Government requirements.
- Deliver kerbside hard waste collection services and bundled branch collection services.
- Deliver regular cleaning of Council owned buildings, roads, footpaths and public toilets.
- Deliver rapid removal, investigation and prosecution of people and organisations illegally dumping rubbish and shopping trolleys.
- Deliver a feasibility assessment into an integrated waste transfer station within the municipality to reduce illegal rubbish dumping.

We support residents and businesses to help them adopt sustainable waste practices and reduce their environmental impact.

- Deliver drop-off events and recycling stations for waste not collected as a kerbside service.
- Provide affordable waste and recycling vouchers to support the community to dispose of waste responsibly.
- Deliver programs to support community groups and partner organisations to give good quality items to people who can benefit from them instead of sending them to landfill.
- Deliver waste education to local schools, community groups and at community events.
- Support community groups to organise clean-up events within their local community.

- Deliver litter enforcement by installing cameras at litter hot spots to monitor, deter illegal dumping and allow for enforcement and prosecution.
- Deliver information to households about the amount of waste typically generated in their community to support awareness, encourage personal accountability and promote waste reduction behaviours.

We provide management and maintenance to our waterbodies and raingardens and support service authorities in improving the health and function of waterways.

- Deliver and clean out Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) which intercept our stormwater drainage network to collect rubbish and green waste washing off our catchments.
- Deliver routine landscape maintenance around our wetlands, lakes and raingardens to filter out harmful nutrients in stormwater.
- Advocate for the best stormwater management practices in new community projects.
- Enforce better stormwater management practices in new land developments to reduce the strain on waterways by using improve infrastructure and new technologies.
- Partner with Melbourne Water to investigate, plan and deliver new stormwater harvesting schemes to reduce stress on our waterways while providing alternative water sources to our sporting facilities.
- Deliver cleaning of our sedimentation basins to restore their capacity and prevent harmful silts from entering creeks and rivers.
- Support creek management committees to share waterway health education programs.

Strategic Priority

SP13	Deliver a targeted program to eliminate rubbish dumping, including stronger enforcement, shorter wait times for collection and community education on waste minimisation, illegal dumping and recycling.	HP DAP
SP14	Deliver the food and garden waste service to all households in the municipality and trial new waste and recycling collection services for waste such as soft plastics.	HP
SP15	Deliver increased reuse and repurposing of materials in Council's asset maintenance and renewal programs.	HP
SP16	Deliver the revitalisation of Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park to improve water quality and habitat for flora and fauna and enhance local area.	HP DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Setting the Landfill Levy fee per tonne Council pays for waste	Victorian Government
Distribution of the Landfill Levy for services that address waste generation and supporting the circular economy	Victorian Government
Management of litter and waste dumped on VicRoads roadside and State Government land	Victorian Government

Community quote:

"We had a meet your neighbour event in Wollert and came together to clean the streets of rubbish - could this be a regular thing Council organises?"



THEME 6:

I like being physically active and enjoy the outdoors. How will I be able to do this locally?

Our ongoing work

We deliver and maintain parks and outdoor recreation facilities to support physical health, mental well-being and social interaction.

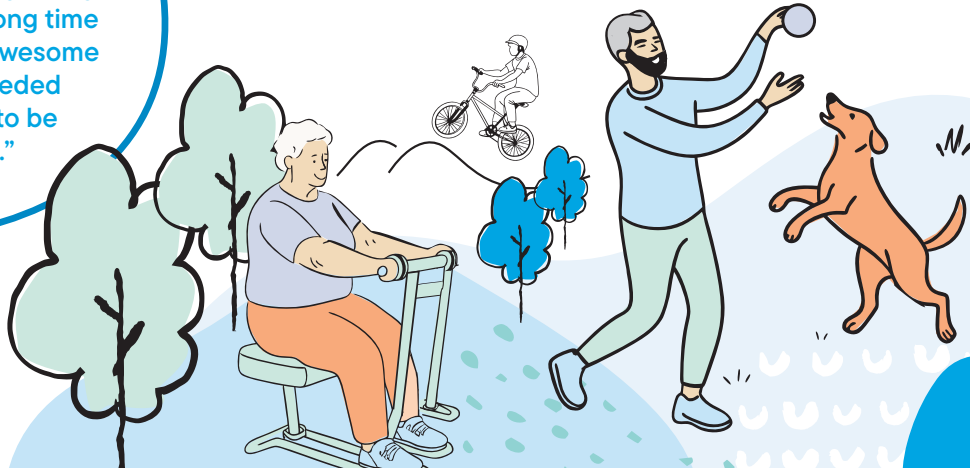
- Plan, deliver and maintain a range of parks and green spaces to provide safe, inclusive spaces to the whole community to relax, play and exercise.
- Plan, deliver and maintain a variety of facilities that enable the community to enjoy the outdoors, such as playgrounds, skate parks, dog parks and splash parks.
- Plan, deliver and maintain sporting facilities, including sports fields, aquatic facilities, gymnasiums, a golf course and an athletics stadium to enable participation in sport and physical activity for all ages and abilities.
- Partner with marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parkland working group and stakeholders to advocate for the delivery of the future directions plan.
- Collaborate with developers delivering parks and recreational facilities in new neighbourhoods to ensure they are high-quality, inclusive and meet community needs.

We provide inclusive recreational and leisure opportunities that welcome everyone, regardless of their abilities or background.

- Deliver an ongoing program of facility upgrades to improve accessibility and meet Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements, enabling more people with disability to participate fully in community life.
- Partner with other organisations to facilitate shared access to non-Council facilities, increasing the number and variety of recreation facilities available for community use.
- Deliver community festivals and events that promote physical activity and health and wellbeing.
- Support local sporting clubs by leasing Council’s sporting facilities, enabling them to grow participation in sport and strengthen community connections.
- Deliver development programs for sporting clubs to promote safe, welcoming and well-run sporting environments in line with Council’s Fair Access Policy.
- Facilitate investigations into barriers that prevent the community from using parks and recreation facilities and inform improvements that make them welcoming and accessible for everyone.

Community quote:

“Thank you so much for upgrading the dog park. It’s been a long time coming. It’s a great area, awesome dog park size. It just needed more done. Can’t wait to be able to use it more.”



Strategic Priority

SP17	Deliver Council’s Fair Access Policy to ensure women and girls can equally use local sports facilities and feel supported to get involved in sport and recreation.	HP	DAP
SP18	Deliver the Granite Hills Major Community Park featuring an adventure park and playground, open-air pavilion, public barbecues, giant slides, nature and water play and public toilets with a Changing Places facility.	HP	DAP
SP19	Deliver and operate the Regional Sports Precinct in Mernda consisting of an indoor stadium with multi-purpose courts, lit outdoor netball courts, a netball pavilion, car parking, pathways, lighting, landscaping and wetlands.	HP	DAP
SP20	Deliver the new Wollert Sports Reserve consisting of playing fields with lighting, multi-purpose sporting spaces, playground, car parking and a community pavilion.	HP	DAP
SP21	Deliver the Huskisson Reserve Multi-Purpose Facility in Lalor consisting of a new multi-purpose community pavilion, redevelopment of the existing tennis courts into new courts with lighting, car parking, pathways and landscaping.	HP	DAP
SP22	Deliver the new Edgars Creek Recreation Reserve in Wollert consisting of a new multi-purpose community pavilion, an additional oval, outdoor sport courts, open space and a recreation area and car parking.	HP	DAP
SP23	Deliver the new Ashley Park Recreation Reserve in Doreen consisting of playing fields with lighting, a new multi-purpose community pavilion, playground and car parking.	HP	DAP
SP24	Deliver the staged construction of VR Michael Reserve Master Plan in Lalor providing an upgraded dog off leash area, central lawn, circuit paths, toilet facilities, exercise fitness station and car parking.	HP	DAP
SP25	Deliver the staged construction of Whittlesea Park Master Plan in Whittlesea Township providing trees, play spaces, circuit paths, bridges and car parking.	HP	DAP
SP26	Deliver the staged construction of Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan in Lalor, Lowalde Recreation Reserve Master Plan in Epping, Nick Ascenzo Reserve in Thomastown,Whittlesea Public Gardens in Lalor and Mernda Recreation Reserve Master Plan in Mernda.	HP	DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Develop joint agreements to provide community access to school facilities	Department of Education
Management of regional and state parks such as Plenty Gorge Park and marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands.	Parks Victoria, Victorian Government and others.

THEME 7:

I want to feel physically, culturally and psychologically safe in my community. What will you do to keep me free from harm and promote responsible and respectful behaviour?

Our ongoing work

We work with the community to build a culture of safety, equality and respect.

- Advocate gender equity and help the community recognise, prevent, and seek support for all forms of violence.
- Advocate an inclusive, safe and respectful environment in all council facilities and services for the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Partner with external groups to create and deliver programs that address gender inequity and prevent violence against women and provide a comprehensive response to family violence.
- Partner with local service providers to enhance support and referral pathways for families experiencing family violence and associated legal concerns.
- Promote equity and inclusion, raising community awareness on the harm of racism with information on how to report it as well as how to access relevant support services.
- Support and partner with external stakeholders to deliver initiatives that focus on increasing understanding of culture and diversity, building positive relationships and empowering community-led responses.

We enforce Victorian Government legislation and Council's Community Local Law to ensure the whole community can live well and feel secure.

- Partner with Victoria Police, Liquor Control Victoria and Emergency Management Victoria to ensure a holistic approach to community safety.
- Enforce planning laws and policies to ensure buildings and developments are in appropriate areas, are well-designed and protect environmental values and heritage.
- Deliver the management of parking across the municipality to support safe, accessible and welcoming neighbourhood streets, as well as ensuring access to services and local town centres to help boost local business.
- Facilitate safe driving and parking practices around schools to ensure safety for children and reduce traffic congestion.
- Continue to deliver a fine appeal process for the community in line with Victorian legislation and Fines Victoria guidelines.
- Deliver event permits to ensure events adhere to local laws and are managed effectively, responsibly and safely.
- Deliver further awareness of Council's Community Local Law and how they help support local communities.
- Deliver regular audits of Bushfire Management Overlays to help reduce the risk to people and property.

We monitor and regulate businesses and activities that can affect the safety and health of people and neighbourhoods.

- Deliver public health services and education on topics including food safety, tobacco control, registered businesses, accommodation, aquatic facilities, septic tanks, emergency management and communicable disease management in high-risk settings.

We help the community to be prepared and safe during unexpected events such as natural disasters, health emergencies or accidents.

- Maintain community reserves including planned burns to reduce fire risks.
- Partner with emergency response agencies and other groups to prepare for, respond to and manage emergencies quickly and effectively.
- Deliver and support education campaigns to help the community prepare for emergencies, including the Municipal Fire Prevention Inspection program and responsible land management.
- Provide relief centres for our community in the event of an emergency.

We undertake local animal management to support the safety, wellbeing and harmony of the community and its animals.

- Deliver the services of the wat djerring Animal Facility to align with Council's municipal Domestic Animal Management Plan.
- Deliver animal management services including pet registration, addressing complaints regarding potentially dangerous animals, promoting responsible pet ownership and ensuring responsible management of animals in urban and rural settings.

We monitor and enhance the safety of Council-owned facilities, parks, streets and neighbourhoods.

- Monitor new housing developments to ensure they are designed well, including consideration of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.
- Facilitate the delivery of aquatic education programs to improve water safety and ensure people feel more comfortable in and around water.

Community quote:

"I feel more confident walking through the reserve and use the path more at night due to the solar lighting."



Strategic Priority

SP27	Deliver improved lighting of shared paths to provide the community with extended hours for exercise and recreation, enhance perceptions of safety and provide increased sustainable transport options.	HP	DAP
SP28	Deliver the Suburb Place Frameworks to enhance the municipality’s distinct character, improve safety, enhance public spaces and upgrade infrastructure.	HP	DAP
SP29	Partner with external emergency and welfare services to explore the feasibility of a Safer Neighbourhoods Expo to enhance community education and awareness of available services.	HP	DAP
SP30	Advocate for equality and partner on initiatives that build a safe, respectful community with zero tolerance for all forms of violence, including family, gender-based, racial, faith-based and LGBTIQ+ violence.	HP	DAP



Health Plan



Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Noise, air and light pollution coming from private property	Environmental Protection Authority Victoria
Enforcing crimes and criminal behaviour	Victoria Police
Enforcing anti-social behaviour such as hoon driving and speed observation	Victoria Police
Maintaining private property from dumped rubbish, graffiti or long grass	Various
Setting policy and enforcement capabilities in regard to public health issues including alcohol and other drugs, gambling, smoking and vaping	Victorian Government
Provision of Public Intoxication Response Service in line with decriminalisation of public intoxication.	Victorian Government
Management and enforcement of registered infringement notices and court-ordered fines	Fines Victoria
Animal welfare enforcement	RSPCA



THEME 8:

I'm proud to live here. How will you ensure my neighbourhood meets our diverse housing needs, is functional and well-designed?

Our ongoing work

We advocate to increase the supply of affordable housing in the City of Whittlesea, so community have access to diverse housing options.

- Advocate and seek to secure available funding from State and Federal Government to support social and affordable housing in our municipality.
- Partner with neighbouring and other local governments in Melbourne's outer areas to address housing affordability challenges through a coordinated regional approach.
- Advocate with our community, developers and Community Housing Associations to increase the delivery of affordable housing to build strong and inclusive communities.

We plan and manage neighbourhood development and change, ensuring that land use and infrastructure meet the community's current and future needs.

- Deliver new strategic land use plans, planning policy updates and place-based frameworks to enable good growth and ensure high quality development and public spaces across the City of Whittlesea.
- Monitor strategic land use plans and planning policy updates prepared by others, including the Victorian Government, to ensure they deliver the best outcomes for our community in accordance with Council's planning policies.
- Deliver the management of Council's property and land portfolio to deliver best value for our community, in line with Council's priorities.

We regulate and guide how the municipality grows by making sure new neighbourhoods and buildings are well-designed, reflect the local area, are environmentally sustainable and respect our heritage.

- Deliver planning and heritage overlays and guidance to protect cultural heritage, significant landscapes and heritage buildings.
- Deliver and monitor development against Council's Neighbourhood Design Manual and design policies in the Planning Scheme to promote high quality design and sustainable developments.
- Facilitate planning and design of transport and civil infrastructure for new developments in our growth corridor for new neighbourhoods to be safe, functional and well connected.
- Deliver and maintain public art in community spaces that enhances the local landscape and celebrates communities.
- Deliver the management of the Ziebell's museum and farmhouse to educate and engage people with the heritage of Thomastown.
- Partner and provide guidance to local heritage and historical societies.
- Deliver and maintain attractive streets with trees, footpaths, bins, lighting and seating.
- Deliver the Town Centre Revitalisation program to make our shopping strips and public spaces more vibrant, inviting, safe and accessible.
- Establish Design Review processes to support the delivery of good design and high use areas in our municipality.

Strategic Priority

SP31	Deliver revitalised and upgraded neighbourhood streetscapes and shopping precincts to enhance accessibility and local character and support local spending.	HP DAP
SP32	Deliver a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls achieve high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.	HP DAP
SP33	Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role and proposes future projects that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community.	HP DAP
SP34	Deliver the Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, partnering with a community housing organisation to provide affordable homes and a community park.	HP DAP
SP35	Deliver the Johnsons Road residential development in Mernda, comprising at least 35 homes, including affordable housing, open spaces and pathways linking to the Plenty River.	HP DAP
SP36	Deliver feasibility assessments for key future infrastructure for our growing community.	HP DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Approval of Planning Scheme Amendments	Minister for Planning
Adviser to Minister for Planning	Department of Transport and Planning
Planning for Precinct Structure Plan areas and Epping Activity Centre to guide development in growth areas.	Victorian Government
Preparation of state planning policy and approval of local planning policies to guide new development.	Victorian Government
Approval of State Government infrastructure including roads, schools and health facilities.	Victorian Government
Maintenance of State Government road reserves, drainage reserves and parks.	Victorian Government, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria
Maintenance of roads, parking areas and landscaping in private developments including shopping centres and some commercial, industrial and residential developments.	Private landowner, Body Corporate

Community quote:
"I want to be in a society that cares, and community housing is a great thing."



THEME 9:

I’m a business owner. How will you support the local economy and help businesses create local employment opportunities?

Our ongoing work

We assist local business and industry by providing timely information, simplifying processes and creating opportunities to connect through events and professional networks.

- Partner to provide a program that supports small businesses to grow by identifying their challenges and strengths in business, management, leadership, knowledge and skills.
- Work with emerging small business to ensure they are registered and compliant with community expectation and standards, ensuring high quality local products.
- Facilitate the Business Advisory Panel, business network program and events to provide businesses with networking events, learning and promotional opportunities.
- Deliver a monthly business e-Newsletter to inform businesses about services, programs, events, training and grant opportunities.
- Deliver the annual business awards program to recognise and celebrate business excellence and achievements in the municipality.
- Partner with property owners, agents and entrepreneurs to bring life to vacant commercial spaces.
- Partner with local retail businesses to promote and sell locally made produce through restaurants and markets.
- Facilitate collaboration and futureproofing of the agri-food sector by facilitating collaboration between industry, education and research and development.
- Facilitate and support agriculture businesses through discounted rates to primary producers who are enhancing local food security and preserving green space.
- Provide support to small-scale farms to explore and grow sustainable agriculture.

We deliver investment attraction programs to encourage new businesses and industries, help the local economy grow and increase local job opportunities.

- Partner with neighbouring municipalities to promote the region’s attractions and encourage tourism investment.
- Showcase the City of Whittlesea to residents and visitors to promote local tourism and inspire greater exploration of areas such as the Township of Whittlesea.
- Deliver industry attraction programs to health care, manufacturing, logistics, professional services, education, construction and food and beverage sectors.
- Advocate for the establishment of the Melbourne Food, Innovation and Export Hub (MFIH) to help grow the northern region as a leading centre for food production and innovation.

We facilitate employment pathways for residents and work with local business and industry to connect them with qualified local workers.

- Deliver a program that provides individuals facing barriers to employment with meaningful work experience at Council.
- Provide work experience opportunities for university and school students through structured placements at Council.
- Facilitate employment and training opportunities for people with disability.
- Deliver the enhancement of Council as a welcoming, accessible and inclusive employer for people with a disability.
- Facilitate connections between education, industry and community to shape training programs that prepare residents for future jobs and reduce skill shortages.

- Partner with local providers to support young people to access job opportunities and build career pathways close to home.
- Facilitate and support programs and events to provide early childhood educators with local professional development and networking opportunities.

We support new businesses to establish and grow by providing resources and connecting them with support.

- Deliver and facilitate information provision, mentoring and support local businesses need to start and grow successfully.
- Provide free WiFi at Council-owned and managed community centres and libraries.
- Support business owners to apply for Council grants and other funding opportunities to support their operation.

Strategic Priority

SP37	Develop and implement a new Strong Local Economy Strategy to support the growth of the local business community, promote investment, local employment and education opportunities, enhancing social connections and economic sustainability.	HP	DAP
SP38	Advocate for the creation of local jobs and other community benefits as outcomes from the planning and development of the Intermodal Freight Precinct in Beveridge which on completion will be the largest intermodal precinct in Australia transforming the nation’s supply chain and providing economic benefits to the region.		DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Programs delivered or funded through industry	Federal and State Government, NorthLink, Consultants, Sustainability Victoria, Victorian Tourism Industry Council, Mainstreet Australia
Planning, construction and management of schools and school grounds	Victorian Government or independent school providers
Tertiary and vocational education courses	RMIT, Melbourne Polytechnic, La Trobe University, Libraries, Hume Whittlesea Local Learning Employment Network

We help build the local circular economy by promoting resource recovery, supporting local initiatives that reduce waste and facilitate economic opportunities through reuse, repair and recycling.

- Support and connect local businesses to help them develop, promote and expand their circular economy products and services.
- Partner with businesses to explore opportunities to repurpose their waste and decrease energy consumption.

Community quote:

“I love that I can shop at my local strip shop without having to go to a big centre. When you upgrade the streets and shopfronts, they become more welcoming and people spend more time and money there.”

THEME 10:

I love being part of my community – meeting people, getting involved and exploring different neighbourhoods. How will you help me stay connected, feel welcome and enhance my health and wellbeing?

Our ongoing work

We deliver and support a range of creative activities and events that provide opportunities for creative expression, social interaction, celebrating different cultures and champion local voices.

- Deliver a creative arts program at PRACC to enable the community enjoy performances and participate in programs locally.
- Deliver and support a diverse range of events and festivals across the City of Whittlesea, engaging people of all ages, backgrounds and interests, while celebrating our community, places and cultures.
- Facilitate engagement with the local disability community to find out what makes participation hard and support inclusive programs, events and activities across Council.
- Provide venue hire at PRACC to enable professional and community artists to showcase their work and nurture creative talent.
- Support community groups to produce local festivals that reflect the diversity of the municipality through an event permit program.
- Deliver programs and activities that help people connect with the community, explore heritage and develop their creative skills.
- Deliver a visual arts program including public art, annual art exhibition and creative workshops for people to express their voices.
- Facilitate the celebration of culture, history and the diverse interests in our community by recognising dates of significance through events and information sharing opportunities.
- Deliver first time parent groups and facilitate the delivery of community playgroups to foster local connections between families.

We promote lifelong learning by supporting education and skill development at every stage of life.

- Partner with local neighbourhood houses to deliver community education programs.
- Deliver library services to provide free access to books, technology, learning opportunities and social connections.
- Deliver the Community Leadership Program to empower local residents with the skills and knowledge to drive positive change and leadership in the community.
- Provide creative workshops and opportunities to encourage life-long learning.
- Deliver heritage, creative and educational programs at Ziebell's Museum and Farmhouse.
- Provide free WiFi at Council-owned and managed community centres and libraries to promote on-line connection and ease financial burden.

We empower the community to create and lead their own events and projects by providing support, resources and networks.

- Deliver a community grants program to support community-led, grassroot initiatives.
- Provide Council facilities for individuals and community groups to access safe, inclusive and well-equipped spaces that support social, cultural, recreational and educational activities.
- Partner with local environmental groups to run events to support the natural environment.
- Facilitate a network of local artists and creative practitioners for networking, collaboration and capacity building.
- Deliver an annual art exhibition to enable local artists to showcase their artworks.

- Partner and support community and sporting groups to provide programs to enhance health, wellbeing and participation opportunities.
- Partner with volunteering organisations to enhance community participation and extend the reach of community services.

Work to ensure everyone can access the programs, services and information they need to feel included and supported in their community.

- Deliver the Home and Community Care for Younger People (HACCPYP) Program to help people who want to live as independently as possible in their homes and community, but who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Deliver programs and partnerships to build inclusive attitudes and support initiatives that strengthen the voice, participation and leadership of people with disabilities.

- Facilitate engagement with the local disability community to identify barriers to social participation and support the delivery of all abilities and specialist disability programs, events and activities throughout Council.
- Deliver community forums, newsletters and networking opportunities for people with a disability and carers.
- Facilitate the Whittlesea Community Futures alliance of local services providers to coordinate access to human and health services and advocate for local community needs.
- Partner with service providers to strengthen and simplify mental health referral pathways, ensuring people of all ages can access the support they need.

- Partner with services to provide health, support and housing information to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Provide access to showers, WiFi and computers at Council facilities and leisure centres for people experiencing homelessness.
- Provide flexible rate payment options to support community members experiencing financial hardship.
- Partner with all levels of government and community organisations to support initiatives that provide people with access to healthy, fresh and culturally appropriate food, such as mobile foodbanks, community gardens, grants and emergency food relief.

Community quote:

“When people are drawn into something from a place of fun, then barriers are reduced and people are open to other experiences.”



Strategic Priority

SP39	Partner with First Peoples communities to co-design and deliver programs and activities at the Aboriginal Gathering Place and throughout the municipality that support social, physical, cultural, emotional and wellbeing needs.	HP DAP
SP40	Facilitate increased awareness and advocate about the risks of gambling harm in the City of Whittlesea.	HP DAP
SP41	Advocate and facilitate the expansion of local services to support individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk.	HP DAP
SP42	Facilitate local services to improve access to fresh, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food; respond to food insecurity and promote healthy eating.	HP DAP
SP43	Advocate for and facilitate improved access to mental health services and partner to raise awareness and deliver preventative programs.	HP DAP
SP44	Support service providers to expand initiatives that promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in community life, employment and education.	DAP
SP45	Deliver a campaign to attract major festivals and events to the region to increase visibility and promote social cohesion.	HP DAP
SP46	Deliver a revitalisation program for the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre (PRACC) to enhance its role as a hub for performing arts and creative industries.	HP DAP
SP47	Facilitate greater community use and activation of Council-owned facilities to encourage a broader range of uses, participation across all life stages and improved accessibility for everyone in the community.	HP DAP
SP48	Deliver accessible precincts for people living with a significant disability and their carers, including enhanced facilities, sensory spaces and greater flexibility in utilising community facilities.	DAP
SP49	Partner with other Councils to renew the regional Library Services Agreement and to transition the service to a new entity as required by the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .	HP DAP
SP50	Deliver the West Wollert Community Centre providing kindergarten/early years rooms, maternal child health consulting rooms, a community hall, lounge and library space, meeting rooms and a community garden.	HP DAP
SP51	Deliver the Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook providing kindergarten/early years rooms, maternal child health consulting rooms, a community hall, lounge and mini-branch library space and meeting rooms.	HP DAP



Health Plan



Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Legislation, enforcement of human rights and other equity principles.	Human Rights Commission - Victorian and Federal Government
Direct service provision for family violence victim-survivors or affected family members and people using violence (with exception of Children & Family Services including Maternal Child Health Nurses).	Not for profit Victorian and Federal government funded bodies
Case management, direct outreach and funding or provision of emergency accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.	Victorian Government
Emergency/crisis response i.e. for mental health or alcohol or drug related episodes	Victorian and Federal Government
Delivering public housing, social and affordable housing	Victorian and Federal Government



THEME 11:

I want to contribute to Council decisions and stay up to date. How will you keep me informed, seek my views and make it easy for me to engage with Council?

Our ongoing work

We create opportunities for the community to share what matters most to them and shape Council decisions.

- Facilitate opportunities for the community to provide feedback and share ideas through a variety of methods, such as pop-ups, surveys, Coffee with Council, Council’s engagement website and deliberative engagement opportunities such as focus groups.
- Deliver Council’s Community Engagement Framework, ensuring we hear a variety of voices including young people, First Peoples, people with disability and our multicultural community.
- Facilitate self-determination for First Peoples through culturally informed approaches that ensure active involvement in decisions that impact their communities.
- Facilitate and support the City of Whittlesea Youth Council, providing young people with opportunities to develop leadership skills and actively participate in decision-making.
- Deliver consultation with children, young people and those directly involved in their lives to understand current and emerging needs.
- Facilitate advisory groups and committees to deepen understanding of the diverse experiences within our community and strengthen Council’s connection with different groups.
- Deliver creative ways to engage with the community, including using an engagement vehicle to make it easier for our community to stay informed and have their say on matters that are important to them.
- Facilitate community to attend Council meetings, ask questions and make submissions.
- Facilitate community input on statutory planning matters.

We keep the community informed about Council decisions and share updates on services, programs and facilities available to support residents.

- Provide the community with information about Council services, facilities, programs, projects, events and Council decisions using a variety of methods, including digital and traditional channels to foster participation and build trust between Council and the community.
- Deliver Council communication in a variety of accessible formats so our diverse community have access to the information they need to live safely, stay informed and be involved in the community.
- Deliver real-life examples of how people are using Council services in their daily lives to increase understanding, encourage participation and to build a sense of community.

We provide a variety of ways for community members to interact and seek support from Council.

- Provide the community with options to make enquiries and payments in-person, over the phone and online.
- Deliver surveys to measure how satisfied community members are after engaging with Council and use our learnings to continually improve our customer service.

Strategic Priority

SP52	Deliver innovative and technology-driven solutions to continually enhance customer experience and improve the effectiveness, transparency and efficiency of Council’s operations.	HPDAP
SP53	Facilitate the reduction, removal and prevention of barriers for marginalised and at risk groups to contribute to Council decisions.	HPDAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Responsibility of others

Service or program by others	Who
Emergency response communications	Led by other agencies, amplified by Council



Community quote:

“It is fabulous to see the younger people having their voices heard through the Youth Council to Council.”

THEME 12:

As a ratepayer, I expect Council to operate efficiently and effectively. What will you do to ensure resources are being used wisely?

Our ongoing work

We use clear budgeting and monitoring processes to maintain Council’s long-term financial health and ensure the transparent, responsible use of public funds.

- Deliver prudent financial management including responsible budgeting, cost control, and long-term financial planning to maximise value for ratepayers.
- Facilitate the collaboration with Councillors and the community to align financial decisions with strategic priorities.
- Deliver yearly operational budgets by assessing each expense individually, ensuring that all spending is necessary and responds directly to community needs.
- Deliver the Long-Term Financial Plan to demonstrate to the community the long-term financial sustainability of Council.

Our work is guided by legal and Council-approved processes that support good decision-making and ensure everyone’s role is clearly understood.

- Deliver on the requirement to maintain long-term financial viability of the Council with priority in achieving the best outcomes for the community, including future generations.
- Provide gender impact assessments on key initiatives, in line with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, to enhance gender equity in public spaces, Council projects and programs.

- Develop and make available on Council’s website, a four-year professional development training program in line with the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.
- Deliver ongoing mandatory councillor professional development training annually by December in line with the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.
- Coordinate and deliver Mayor and Deputy Mayor training annually within one month after their election to those respective positions in line with the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- Annually review the councillor group commitment to work as a team.

We undertake continuous improvement across all Council operations to ensure responsible use of public funds, effective service delivery and the ability to adapt to the changing needs of the community.

- Deliver responsible and best practice investment in, and maintenance of, community assets to support long-term service delivery through the Asset Management Plans.
- Deliver training and practical opportunities for staff to develop their skills and ensure a highly skilled, effective workforce.

Strategic Priority

SP54	Deliver service and innovation reviews to identify ways to improve efficiency, investing in technology like artificial intelligence to boost productivity, optimise resource use and lower costs.	DAP
SP55	Deliver the long-term financial sustainability of Council through the optimisation of resources, infrastructure and asset management.	HP DAP

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

Community quote:

“I appreciate the difficulties Council faces in balancing the budget and appreciate the challenge this poses to Councillors.”



How we will measure and report progress

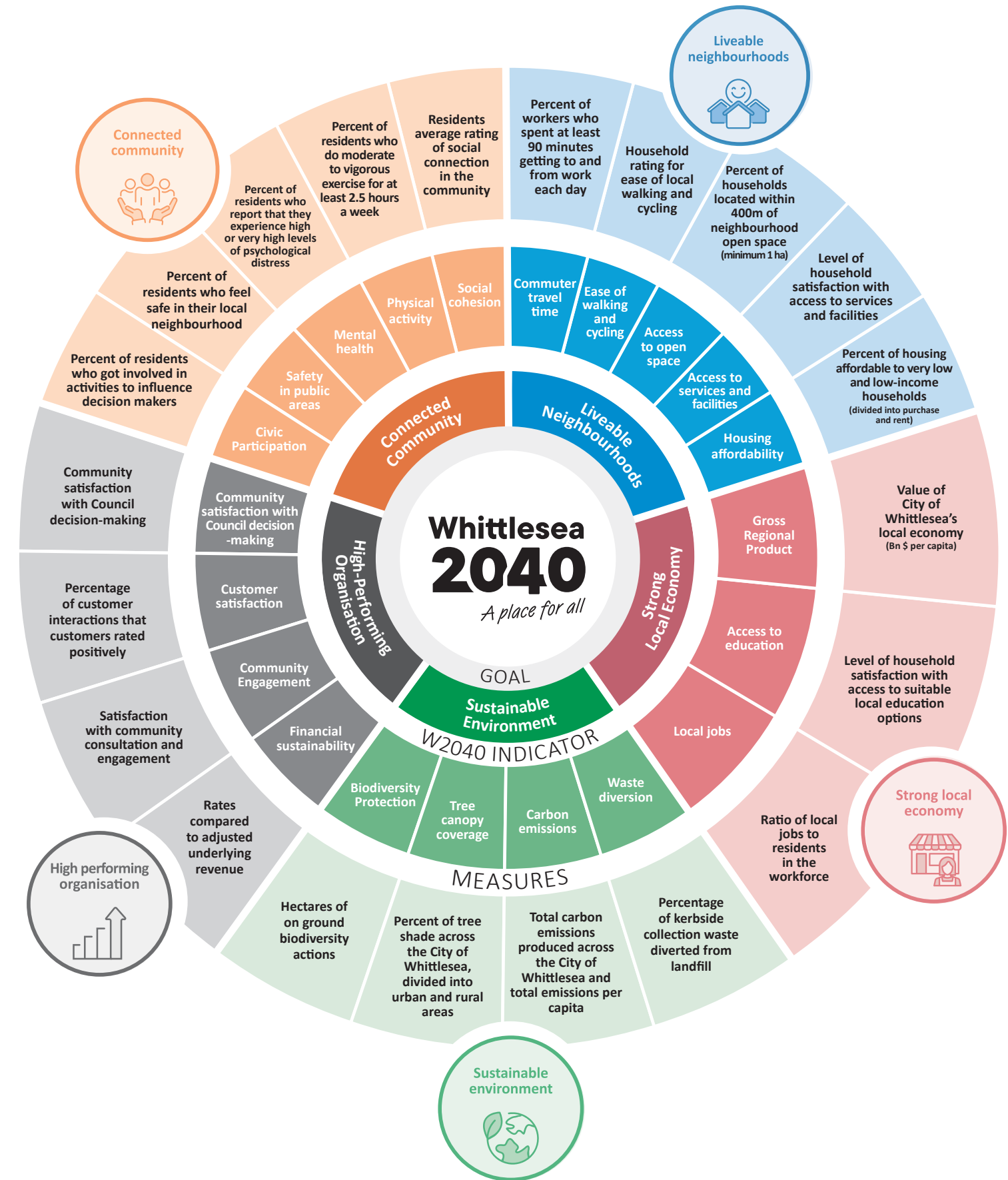
In our long-term vision, *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*, Council has a clear picture of what we want to achieve. It sets the direction of Council's work and future partnerships with the community and others and ensures Council is responding to community need now and in the future.

This Community Plan is our roadmap for creating A place for all in the City of Whittlesea. We are committed to regularly tracking our progress through clear indicators, and reporting back to you, so you can see how your ideas and priorities are being brought to life.

As our city grows and changes, so too will the needs of our community. That's why we'll continue to review and refine this plan through yearly action plans to ensure it remains relevant, responsive and grounded in what matters most to you.

The Whittlesea 2040 indicators are a great way to measure the progress of our Community Plan 2025-2029 and constitute Council's strategic indicators under section 90 (2) (d) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. They form the pinnacle of Council's outcomes and measurement framework which supports strategic alignment, transparency and accountability.

Together, we're building a stronger, more inclusive and connected community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



Appendix

- APPENDIX 1** Our story and suburbs
- APPENDIX 2** Alignment with Integrated Planning Framework (IPF)
- APPENDIX 3** Supporting evidence
- APPENDIX 4** Linkages to the Municipality Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan

Scan to access
Appendix 1-4





COUNCIL OFFICES

Civic Centre
25 Ferres Boulevard
South Morang VIC 3752

Opening hours

Monday – Friday, 8.30am–5pm

Whittlesea Services Hub

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Whittlesea VIC 3752

Opening hours

Monday – Friday, 9.30am–5pm

Telephone 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677
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