



City of Whittlesea

# Youth Council agenda

Monday 4 May 2026 at 6pm



Council Chamber,  
25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang



**City of  
Whittlesea**

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# Youth Councillors

Youth Cr Ahmed Abumeis

Youth Cr Osama Akkad

Youth Cr Dhyani Bhavsar

Youth Cr Gabby Charman

Youth Cr Emma Fasciani

Youth Cr Suad Issa

Youth Cr Clare Joseph

Youth Cr Ethan Kosumo

Youth Cr Alana Luscombe

Youth Cr Charlize Pommier

Youth Cr Hemal Sharma

Youth Cr Mannat Sooch

Youth Cr Caleb Whitehall

Youth Cr Theresa Yan

# Officers

Jacinta Stevens

Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Justine Smith

Unit Manager Council Governance

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## **1 Opening**

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

The Youth Mayor will open the meeting and welcome everyone in attendance.

### **1.2 Apologies/Absent**

### **1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Chair will read the following statement:

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

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

### **1.4 Youth Council Charter**

The Chair will read the following statement:

*“We the members of the City of Whittlesea Youth Council, commit to advocating for and being the voice of the youth within our municipality. We ensure a safe space for all, to engage in constructive collaboration on matters affecting young people. We aim to empower and foster community connectedness in our youth so they feel valued and supported to achieve their aspirations.”*

### **1.5 Acknowledgements**

## **2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

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

### **Recommendation**

**THAT the Youth Council confirm the Minutes of the Youth Council Meeting held on 2 March 2026, as circulated.**

## 4 Officers' Reports

### 4.1 Coulstock Street Place Plan

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Senior Urban Designer

**In Attendance:** Unit Manager Urban Design & Placemaking  
Senior Urban Designer

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the Coulstock Street Place Plan project and proposed community engagement approach.

#### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT the Youth Council:**

1. Note the project scope and next steps.
2. Provide feedback on the project.

## Background / Key Information

### What is a Place Plan?

A “Place Plan” is a smaller focus area or precinct than Council’s suburb wide “Place Frameworks”. A Place Plan provides more detail on proposed actions, priorities and investment required by Council to improve local areas. It also helps engage with a more localised catchment of community members that can speak in more detail about a specific area. This has greater opportunity to build community capacity, care and ownership.

The Coulstock Street Place Plan will detail City of Whittlesea’s approach to coordinating programs and projects to improve the public realm and public land outcomes in the area. The Place Plan establishes a masterplan and a program of actions that will drive the revitalisation of the Place by championing the public realm, fostering belonging and attracting investment in the area. The actions will include trials, activation programs or events, alongside traditional infrastructure and capital investment to achieve the holistic aim of the Place Plan. The Place Plan builds on the place-based model adopted by Council via the Draft Town Centre Revitalisation Program and enhancing Good Design as a core objective of the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy.

### Background of the Coulstock Street Place Plan

Coulstock Street and the nearby areas, including Wedge Street and Church Street, have been identified in the Metropolitan Activity Centre planning as one of the most important opportunities to develop Council-owned land. The aim is to identify a clear vision for the area and improve the overall amenity, functionality, and safety for the local community.

This area is highlighted in the Epping Structure Plan Refresh 2023 as a key site for renewal. Future improvements could include new developments on Council land, the creation of a linear park, and better access for walking, cycling, and driving.

The 2024 review of the Metropolitan Activity Centre by the State Government has brought new policy directions and attention to this area, with a much larger population expected to live here in the future. This growth means the area will play a major role in supporting Victoria’s Housing Statement and meeting federal housing targets.

The project is supported by the Epping Central Development Contribution Plan Implementation Plan (DCP) and the newly created Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP), enabling the use of funds to elevate the public realm. The Coulstock Street Place Plan will inform a broader program of capital and operational projects, and assessment of planning proposals.

## Overview of the Place Plan's development process

### 1. September 2025 – February 2026: PWG Background analysis

A series of workshops and focus meetings were conducted with a Project Working Group made up of internal Council officers to identify opportunities, constraints and gaps. Three main themes were identified: natural environment, public realm, urban structure, and social activities. Surveys and Geotech reports were commissioned to external consultants.

### 2. March – April 2026: Information gathering via community reference group workshop and Council's Engage Page

A workshop was conducted with the community reference group (CRG) on Tuesday 3 March. The group has 17 members of the local community who either work, study or live in the area. Council officers also reached out to the wider community via the [Engage Page](#) and a pop-up session at High Street, Epping. The CRG and community provide input about their lived experience in the Coulstock Street area, focusing on challenges and opportunities.

An Opportunities and Challenges Report will be finalised by the Urban Design and Placemaking Team which summarises background analysis, internal partners workshops and community contributions which inform the draft Place Plan's direction.

### 3. April – September 2026: Project opportunities development

A series of workshops will be undertaken with PWG Council officers and the CRG to shape project opportunities and program of the Draft Place Plan. The project will also be discussed with the Good Design Review external panel members. A climate resilience index is commissioned to La Trobe University to assess climate resilience of project ideas.

### 4. October 2026: Draft Place Plan to ELT and Council for endorsement

An early draft of the Framework is prepared for review by the PCG and ELT. The draft Place Plan is then presented to Council for approval to engage with the community on the draft Place Plan.

### 5. October – November 2026: Community reference group meeting workshop #2 and engage page on the Draft Place Plan

The draft Place Plan opens for community engagement in June – July 2026. Input received from the community, authorities and internal partners inform the final document project ideas. A second CRG in-person workshop and online engagement is organised for this purpose.

## 6. December 2026: Final Place Plan to Council for endorsement

The Place Plan is updated, incorporating feedback from the community engagement, with the report presented to ELT and Council for endorsement.

## 7. January 2027 onward

The endorsed Place Plan is shared with community during a Street Party along with tactical urbanism trials with the area i.e. Pop-up parks or events.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

The Place Plan was announced on 16 December 2025 to gather expression of interests to be a part of the Community Reference Group.

Community engagement on challenges and opportunities went live on Council's engage page on 23 February 2026 and closed on 29 March 2026.

Further communications will be required as the project develops according to the proposed project timelines above.

### Critical Dates

Council endorsement is required to share the Draft Place Plan in October 2026. The Place Plan aims to be finalised by January 2027.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

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

## Attachments

1. Coulstock Street Precinct YC [4.1.1 - 11 pages]

City of Whittlesea

# Youth Council

## Coulstock Street Place Plan

Elisa Casagrande, Senior Urban Designer

Tim D'Agostino, Unit Manager Urban Design and Placemaking



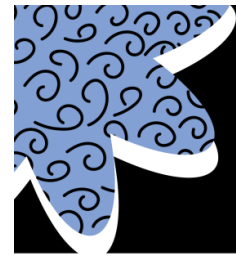
*City of*  
**Whittlesea**

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- 1. To give an overview of the project and community engagement plan**
- 2. Receive Council feedback or insights on the project**





# Project Brief



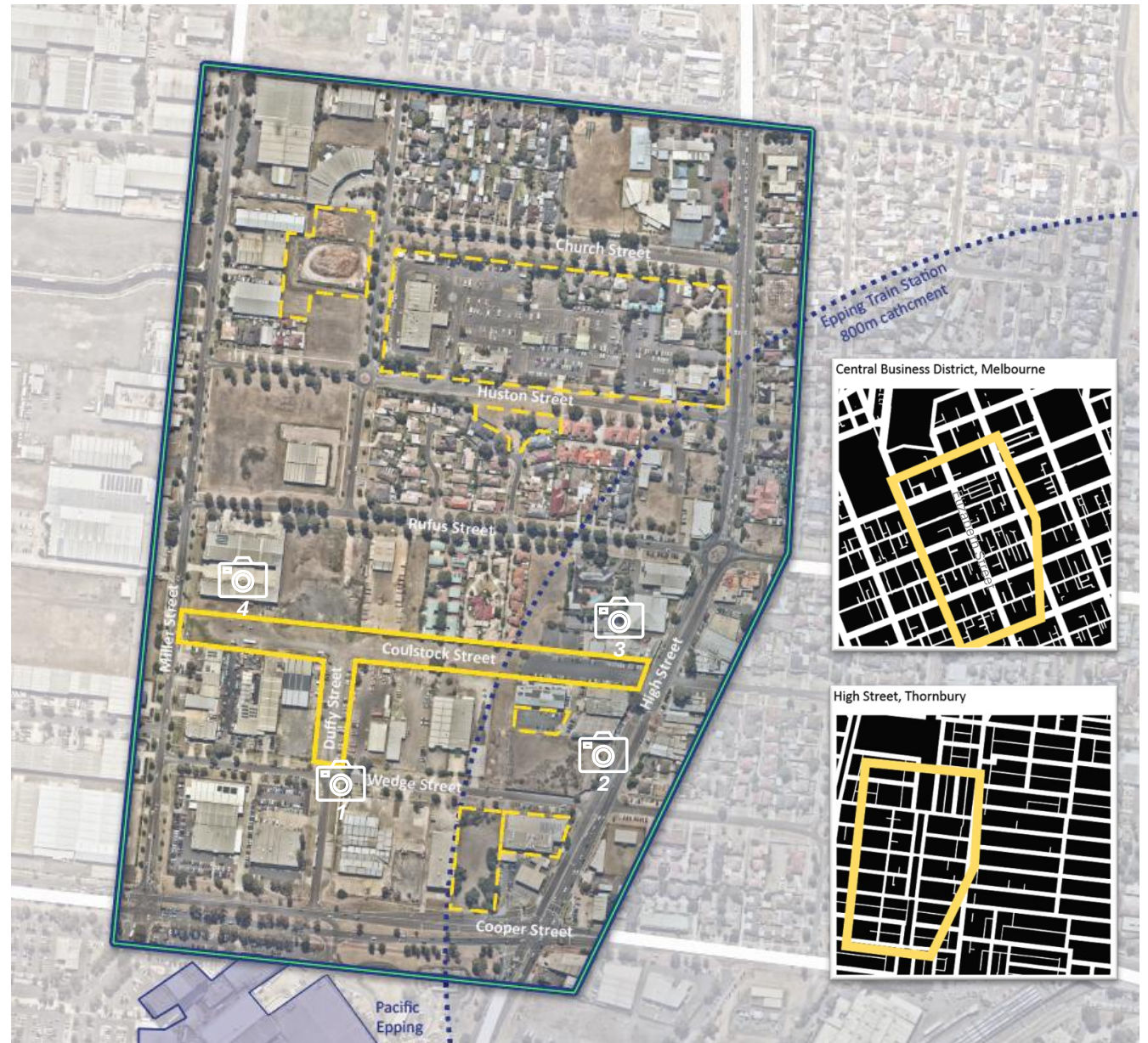
## The project aims are to:

- Achieve Council's vision as outlined in the Epping Central Structure Plan (2023)
- Address Council liability associated with undeveloped Council-owned land
- Respond to community concerns
- Future-proof the Precinct to support the delivery of housing targets established through the Activity Centre Program



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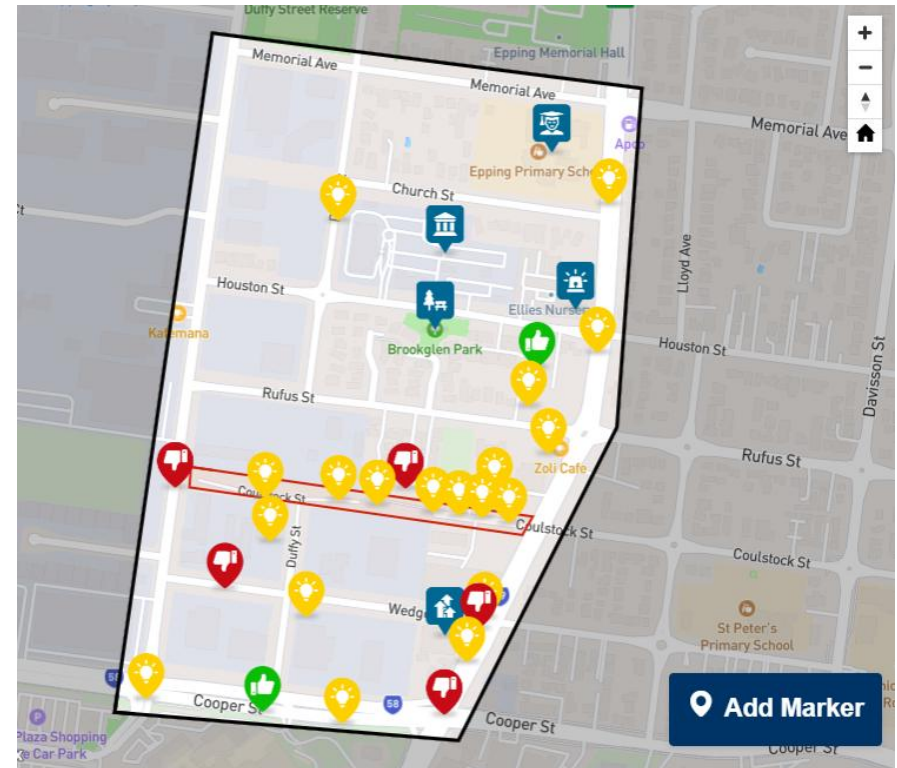




# Project Objectives



1. Deliver a Place Plan including:
  - A Public Realm Master Plan for the Precinct
  - A program of prioritised actions and projects
2. Meet the goals of the Epping Structure Plan 2023 and the DRAFT Town Centre Revitalisation Program
3. Explore development opportunities on Council owned land
4. Use the Wurundjeri principles to guide place design and naming



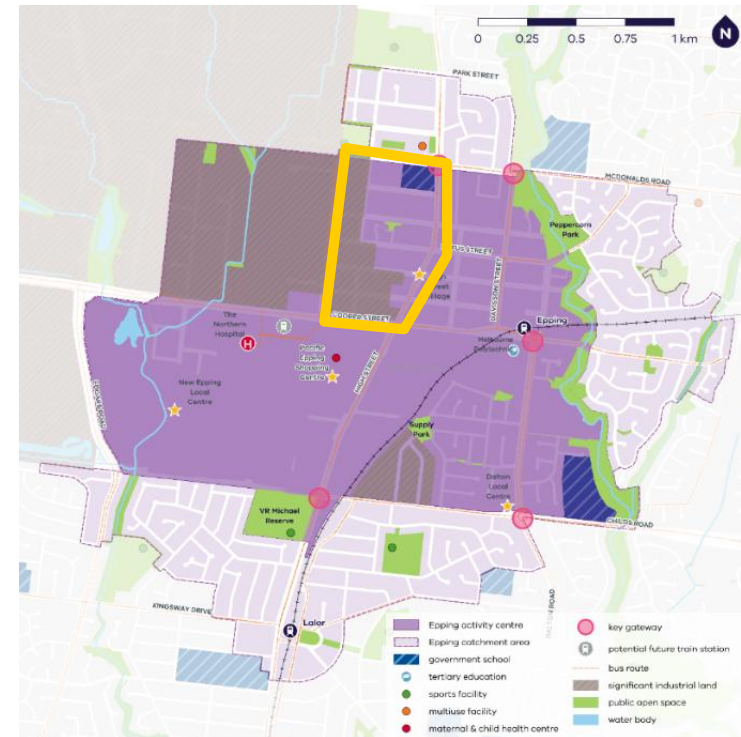
Community insights on Coulstock Street precinct as per Council engage page which closed on March 22

Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017



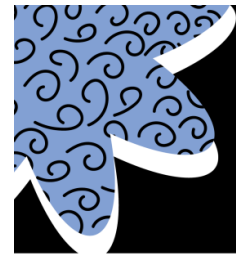
Epping is a **Metropolitan Activity Centre** and plays a major role in supporting **Victoria's Housing Statement** and meeting federal housing targets.

The **2024 Activity Centre Program** by the **Victorian Government** brought new policy and attention to this area. A larger population is planned to live here in the future.

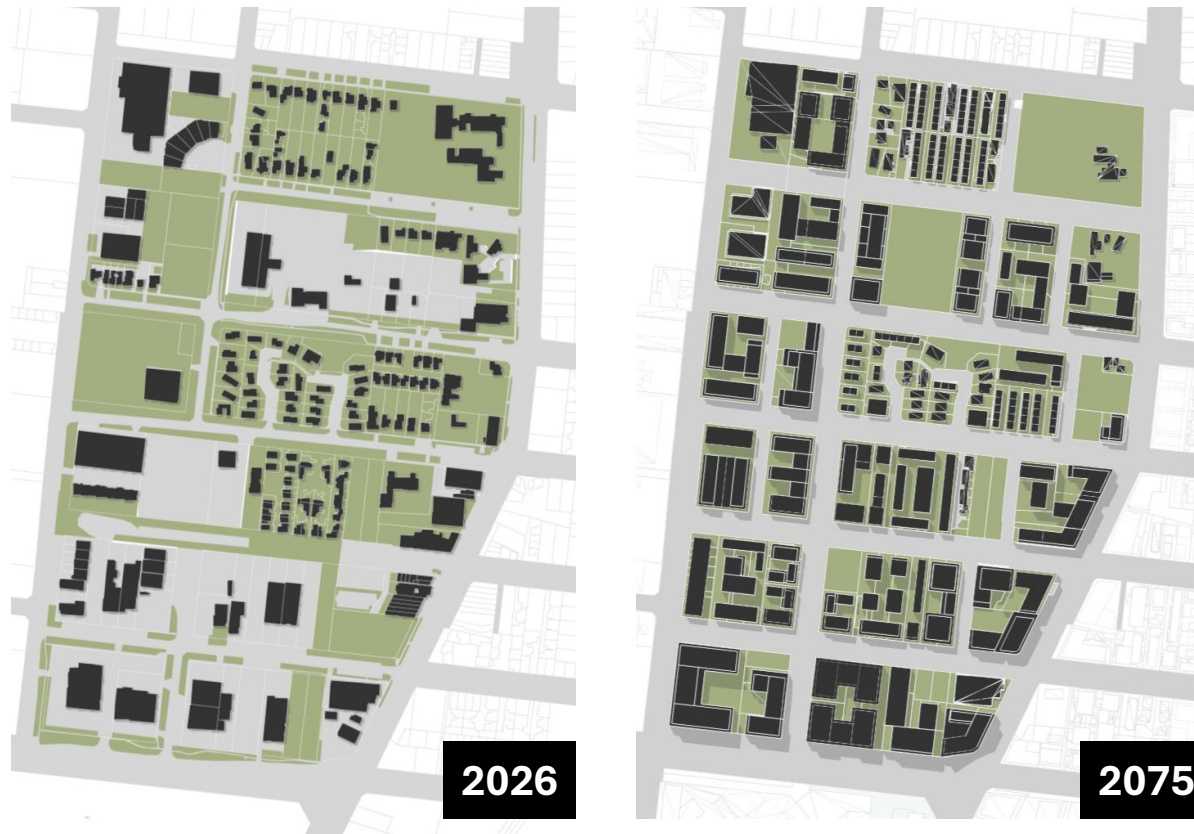


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# Precinct Transformation



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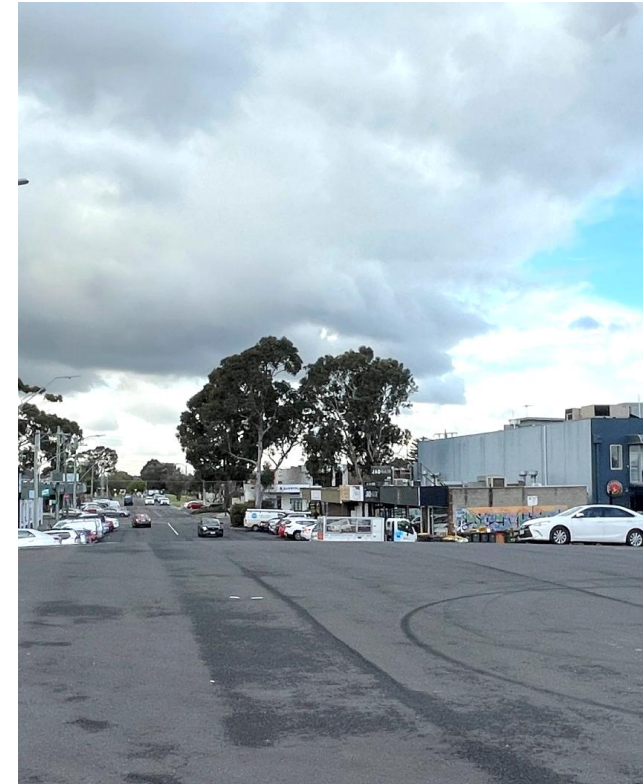


# Strategic Themes



Below themes and opportunities were identified by Council staff and community.

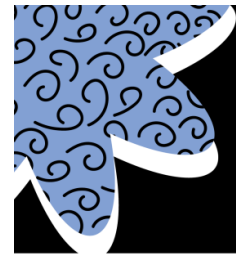
THEME	KEY OPPORTUNITY
<b>Activation</b>	Night-time economy, food trucks, outdoor events
<b>Community</b>	Affordable housing, cultural activities
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Cycling upgrades, car-free streets, stormwater priorities
<b>Public Realm</b>	New square, pedestrian links, upgraded streetscapes
<b>Environment</b>	Canopy and Biodiversity improvement



*View from the top of Coulstock Street looking toward High Street*

Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017



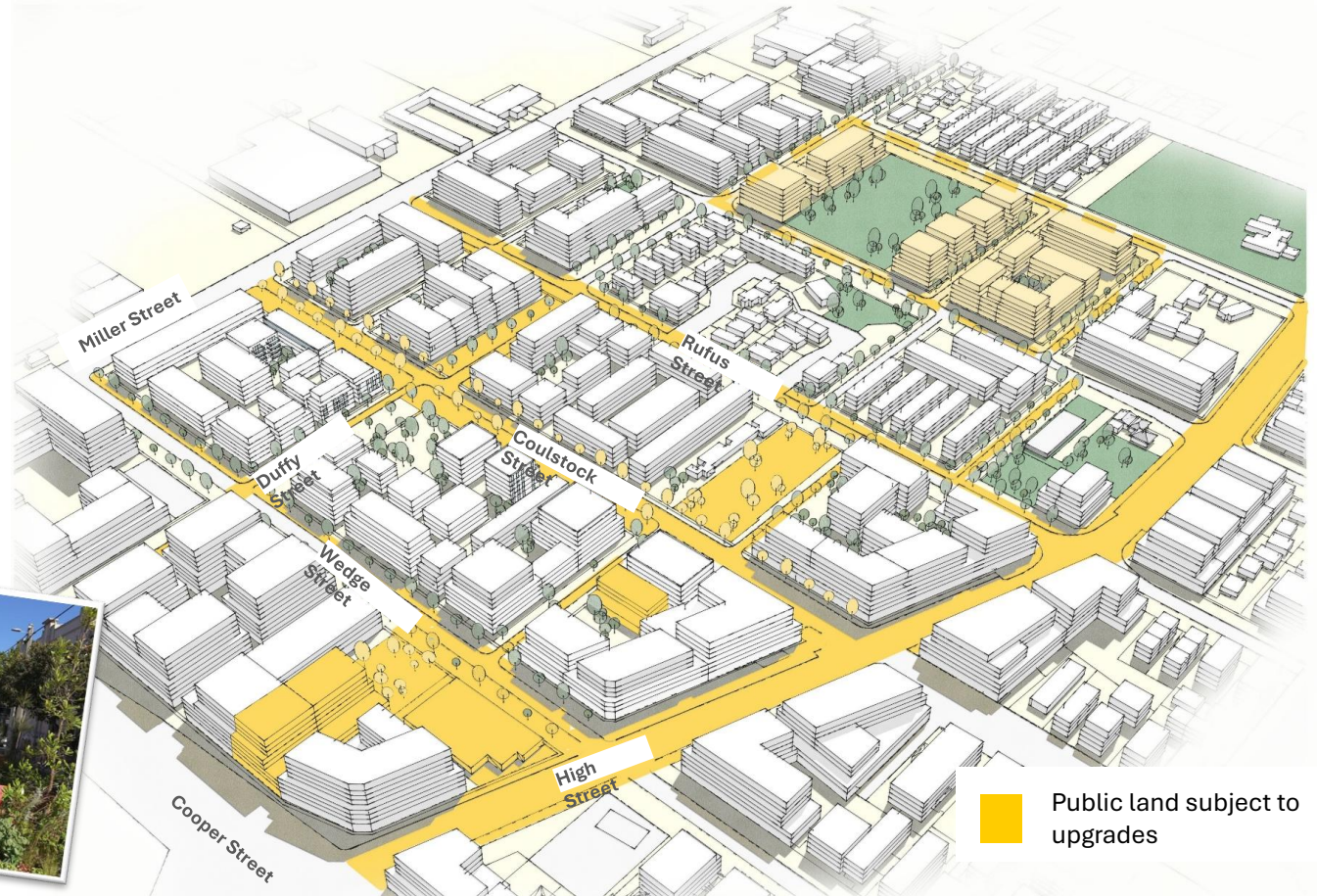


# Place Plan



Engagement with Council staff and the community will frame possible projects for the Draft Place Plan.

This will include a range of trials, activation opportunities and capital delivery projects within the precinct.



Public land subject to upgrades





# Next Steps




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Questions / Comments?

## 4.2 Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Corporate Planning

**In Attendance:** Manager EPMO & Change  
Unit Manager Corporate Planning  
Senior Corporate Planner  
Corporate Planner

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Youth Council to consider the Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 (Attachment 4) which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Following Council endorsement, Council is undertaking community engagement on the Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 between 22 April and 6 May 2026. Feedback may be provided online via the Engage website or in person at community pop-ups, alongside targeted consultation, including this session with the City of Whittlesea Youth Council.

Feedback received will be used to confirm alignment between the proposed actions and community priorities. The Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 is scheduled to be adopted at the Council Meeting on Tuesday 16 June 2026.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT the Youth Council:**

- 1. Read and familiarise themselves with the Community Vision Whittlesea 2040 "A place for all" at Attachment 1, the adopted Community Plan 2025-29 at Attachment 2 and the Community Action Plan 2025-26 at Attachment 3.**
- 2. Engage with us and provide feedback on the Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 at Attachment 4, to be exhibited from Wednesday 22 April 2026 to Wednesday 6 May 2026.**

## Background / Key Information

The Draft Community Action Plan comprises 54 key actions continuing to deliver on the strategic priorities in our Community Plan 2025-2029. These actions span all five goals of the Whittlesea 2040 Vision - Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy, Sustainable Environment and High Performing Organisation to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to delivering on Council's long-term vision for "A Place for All".

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

A comprehensive multi-channel communications campaign will promote the opportunity for community to provide their feedback and make a submission on the Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27.

### Critical Dates

- Community consultation to inform drafts was undertaken in September 2025 and December-February 2026.
- Community consultation for the Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 from the 22 April 2026 to Wednesday 6 May 2026, 5pm.
- The Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 will be considered for endorsement by Council at a Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 16 June 2026 following consideration of community feedback and any submissions to Council.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

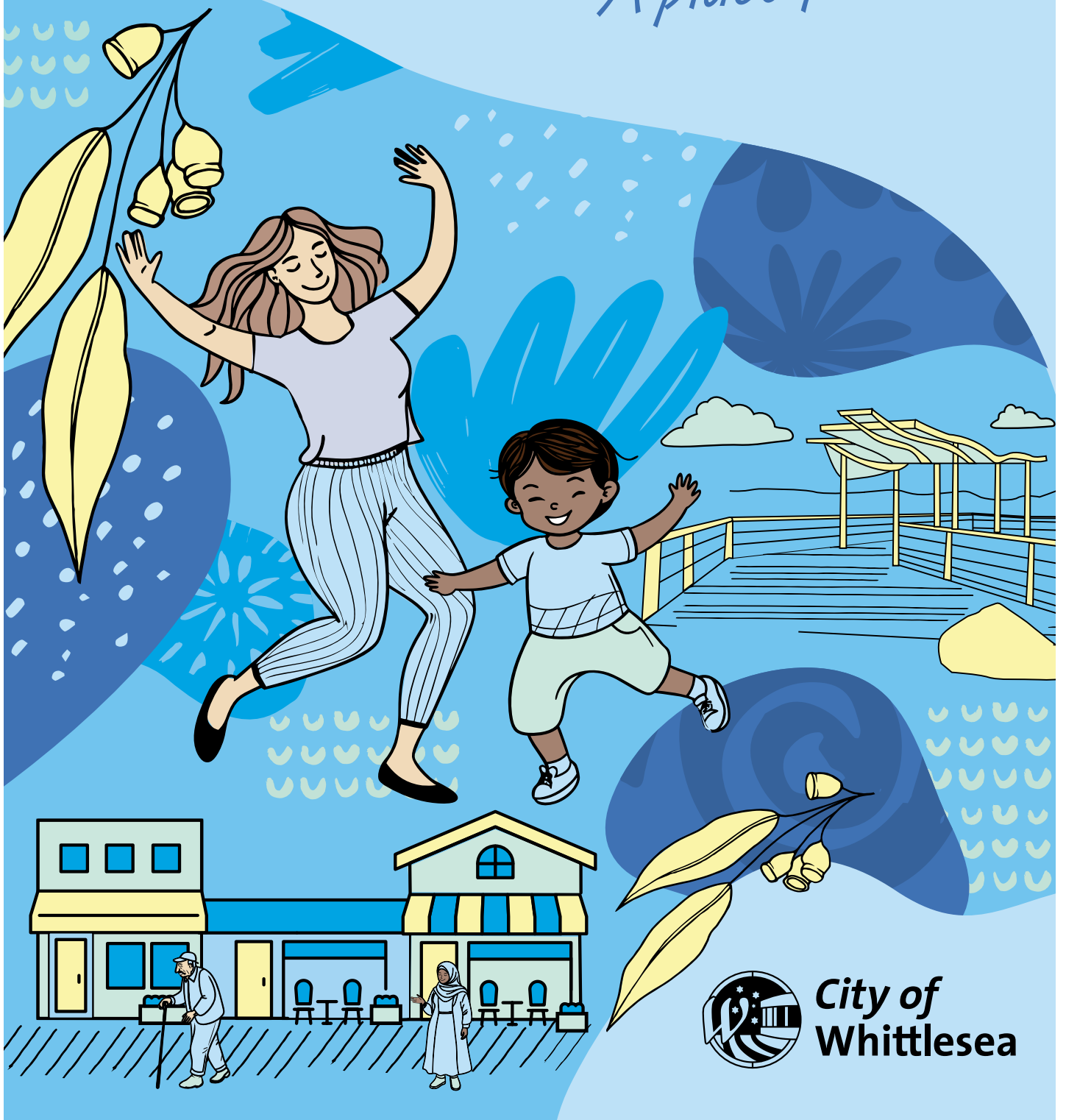
The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

## Attachments

1. Community Vision Whittlesea 2040 [4.2.1 - 15 pages]
2. Community Plan 2025-29 [4.2.2 - 29 pages]
3. Community Action Plan 2025-26 [4.2.3 - 15 pages]
4. Draft Community Action Plan 2026-27 [4.2.4 - 15 pages]

# City of Whittlesea 2040 VISION

*A place for all*



**City of  
Whittlesea**



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## Acknowledgement

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

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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# Message from the Councillors

As a newly elected council, we are delighted to present the Whittlesea 2040 vision: *A Place for All*.

Our community first developed the Vision for the City of Whittlesea as *A Place for All* in 2018.

Since then, our City has grown and changed significantly and the people who call City of Whittlesea home, have new challenges and needs.

Together we have reviewed the Vision, and our latest data and research is guiding us to stay on course towards life in 2040, where we will ensure our City remains a welcoming place for all.

As part of our review, we sought community feedback to fully understand whether the vision and its goals continue to be our community priorities and our community aspirations. We were pleased to see that we have encouraging community support.

Our vision is driven by five interconnected goals; Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy, Sustainable Environment and High Performing Organisation.

Council is committed to bringing this vision to life; fostering a strong sense of belonging, where people from all walks of life are valued for who they are and the qualities they bring and where diversity is celebrated.

The City of Whittlesea is a wonderful place to live, to work and to enjoy life and we hope that it will continue to be seen as a place where everyone feels welcome, truly a place for all.

### City of Whittlesea Councillors

Cr Nic Brooks, Cr Blair Colwell, Cr Lawrie Cox, Cr Deb Gunn, Cr Jarrod Lappin, Cr David Lenberg, Cr Christine Stow, Cr Martin Taylor, Cr Daniela Zinni

# Whittlesea now and in the future

The City of Whittlesea is one of Melbourne's largest and most diverse municipalities. The community is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria and our population is expected to increase by almost 40% from 2025 to 2040.

## Our community

The community is proud of its diversity with a large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and local residents coming from all parts of Melbourne, Australia and overseas. The cultural mix is starting to change with new residents moving into the area from countries such as India, Sri-Lanka, China and Iran. This diversity has contributed to the development of lively communities and interesting urban cultures that make our unique suburbs attractive to future residents and visitors.

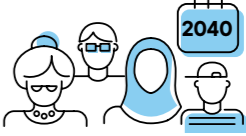
The City of Whittlesea is seen as a leader in the way it builds inclusive and cohesive communities and will continue to welcome people of all backgrounds and from all places into the future. The City of Whittlesea is a family-friendly place. More of our households consist of families with children compared to the Northern Melbourne region and Metropolitan Melbourne. Although the population will age into the future, the community will remain predominantly younger families.


## Our neighbourhoods


The City of Whittlesea has around 93,000 homes distributed throughout our established urban areas in the south, new urban areas in our residential growth corridors, and our rural areas in the north. By 2040, a mix of new housing types will be required to cater for the needs of our growing community.


There will also be a need for new education, community, recreation and aged care services and facilities and infrastructure such as roads, streets and parks to connect our communities.


## What we know


- 

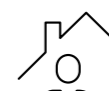
**355,144**  
the estimated population by 2040<sup>2</sup>
- 

**38%** residents born overseas<sup>2</sup>
- 

**4th** highest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders among Victorian metropolitan councils<sup>2</sup>
- 

**54%** of households are families with children
- 

**45%** of residents speak a language other than English at home<sup>7</sup>
- 

**34** the median age in the municipality. Anticipated to be 39 by 2040<sup>8</sup>
- 

**49%** of people work from home at least one day a week<sup>10</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled and presented in profile .ID by .id  
<sup>3</sup> Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled and presented in profile .ID by .id  
<sup>4</sup> SGS Economics and Planning (2018). Whittlesea 2040 Background Paper. Accessed 08/04/2025: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/documents/about-us/news/whittlesea-2040-a-place-for-all/whittlesea-2040-background-research-paper.pdf>  
<sup>5</sup> SGS Economics and Planning (2018). Whittlesea 2040 Background Paper. Accessed 08/04/2025: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/documents/about-us/news/whittlesea-2040-a-place-for-all/whittlesea-2040-background-research-paper.pdf>  
<sup>6</sup> GS Economics and Planning (2018). Whittlesea 2040 Background Paper. Accessed 08/04/2025: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/documents/about-us/news/whittlesea-2040-a-place-for-all/whittlesea-2040-background-research-paper.pdf>  
<sup>7</sup> Source: 2021 census  
<sup>9</sup> Source: .id 2023 population projections  
<sup>10</sup> Source: Community Insights wav 1.1, January 2024

**6** Whittlesea 2040 Vision

**Our economy and transport network**

A large proportion of our residents work in the health care and social assistance and industrial sectors, with fewer employed in jobs that require formal qualifications. However, the nature of work is changing. Routine jobs are increasingly becoming automated with the changes in technology and globalization.

Access to ongoing education and training will be important in the future as jobs continue to change. With educational facilities like La Trobe, RMIT and Melbourne Polytechnic located within close proximity, the community is well placed to broaden their skills for the future.

The separation of residential neighbourhoods from major employment areas, and limited access to public transport, means many residents are dependent on cars and experience long travel times to work. In the future, rapid population growth will increase vehicle trips and exacerbate congestion. However, this growth is also creating opportunities to attract more businesses, increase the number of local jobs and make services, community organisations and clubs more viable and accessible for residents.

**Our environment**

Our municipality boasts beautiful forests, national parks, grasslands of national significance, red gum woodlands, and a network of rivers, creeks and wetlands. However, our climate is changing. By 2040, we will experience increased temperatures and more extreme weather events like heatwave, fire, drought and floods. Some residents and properties will be more vulnerable to these risks.

Through careful planning and action we are working together to mitigate risks and challenges posed by a changing climate.

**Our challenge and opportunity**

Rapid growth in the City of Whittlesea is a challenge for all levels of government, making it hard to keep up and develop infrastructure like roads and public transport, and vital community assets like schools, libraries, sports and health facilities.

We are exploring new and innovative ways to meet the community's needs like upgrading existing facilities, developing flexible hubs, co-locating services, working in partnership and identifying alternate funding sources. The future will also see more opportunities for citizens to work together with government to solve local challenges. A growing and changing community provides us with an opportunity to create the city and neighbourhoods that the community and Council want for the future.

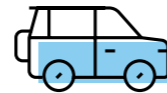
**What we know**



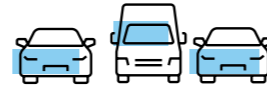
**30%** work locally  
**65%** work outside the local area<sup>3</sup>  
**5%** mobile workers, no fixed location



**40%** of current jobs are anticipated to be automated by 2040<sup>4</sup>



**77%** of residents drive to work<sup>6</sup>



**113,000** additional cars by 2040<sup>4</sup>



**90%** increase in demand for public transport by 2040<sup>4</sup>



Annual temperatures are anticipated to rise between **2 and 3 degrees** by 2040<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021. Compiled and presented in profile .ID by .id  
<sup>4</sup> SGS Economics and Planning (2018). Whittlesea 2040 Background Paper. Accessed 08/04/2025: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/documents/about-us/news/whittlesea-2040-a-place-for-all/whittlesea-2040-background-research-paper.pdf>  
<sup>6</sup> GS Economics and Planning (2018). Whittlesea 2040 Background Paper. Accessed 08/04/2025: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/documents/about-us/news/whittlesea-2040-a-place-for-all/whittlesea-2040-background-research-paper.pdf>



# The Process: Creating a Vision for our City

*Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*, builds on the achievements of Shaping Our Future Whittlesea 2030 and provides a new long term vision for the City of Whittlesea. Over 10 months, in 2018 we conducted research, workshopped priorities, and spoke with thousands of people as well as community groups and organisations across the municipality.



Research, trends and data	Councillor input	Community input
<p>We undertook research to understand where the City of Whittlesea is at now and the trends that will shape the future, in particular:</p> <p>“What are the key changes, challenges and opportunities that will impact Whittlesea in the future?”</p> <p>As part of this work, SGS Economics and Planning prepared the Whittlesea 2040: Background Paper, which discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The growth and scale of change expected in the next 20-30 years;</li> <li>Key challenges and opportunities across five themes: services and infrastructure, employment, climate change, transport infrastructure, and the community; and</li> <li>The potential roles Council can have to support and manage change, and make the most of opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Council has played a guiding role in the development of the Whittlesea 2040 vision. First, it reviewed the research to determine:</p> <p>‘What are the top priorities for the future?’</p> <p>These priorities were then tested and refined through the community consultation.</p> <p><b>Council’s role is to ensure that the Whittlesea 2040 vision sets the direction for the work of Council to respond accurately to community needs and to ensure that it is a shared vision for the future.</b></p>	<p>Over three months, we asked anyone who lives, works, studies, plays in or visits the City of Whittlesea to answer up to three questions:</p> <p>‘What are the things you love about your local area?’</p> <p>‘What are your favourite places in the City of Whittlesea and why?’</p> <p>‘What are your hopes for your local area by 2040?’</p> <p>Over 4,000 individuals, community groups and organisations shared their ideas through workshops, surveys, online maps, postcards, children’s drawing sheets, events and special activities held across our City. Visit <a href="http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au">whittlesea.vic.gov.au</a> for a summary of what the community told us.</p> <p>A detailed Community Engagement Findings Report was developed identifying six emerging priority themes which represented thousands of ideas. This feedback informed the development of ‘the Whittlesea 2040 vision’ with ‘Whittlesea 2040: A place for all’.</p>



**Whittlesea**  
**2040**  
*A place for all*

## Reviewing the Whittlesea 2040 Vision

Following the election of the new Council in October 2024, and in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, we reviewed the Whittlesea 2040 Vision. We reviewed research and engagement trends and data internally and with Councillors. We conducted community engagement to understand the ways the Whittlesea 2040 Vision now connects with our diverse and growing 2025 community. Our research and community engagement affirmed that the Whittlesea 2040 Vision continues to be relevant and reflect community need.

**STEP 1:**

🕒 December 2024 to January 2025

Councillor induction  
Background research paper developed

**STEP 2:**

🕒 February to April 2025

Councillor engagement sessions

**STEP 3:**

🕒 April to May 2025

Community consultation  
Council review sessions

**STEP 4:**

🕒 June 2025

Finalise review  
Reaffirm Whittlesea 2040 Vision

### Research, trends and data

Our quarterly community insights research helped us understand where the City of Whittlesea is at now and the trends that are shaping our future.

We also conducted a rigorous community consultation program to reaffirm the Whittlesea 2040 Vision.

### Councillor input

Council has played a guiding role in the review of the Whittlesea 2040 Vision.

A detailed background document was presented to Council and discussed at review sessions conducted between December 2024 and April 2025.

### Community input

Consultation was undertaken via three forums – dedicated focus groups, in-person pop-up sessions across the municipality and through an online survey.

Our community were asked the following questions:  
Thinking about life in Whittlesea in 2040:  
What do you hope to see achieved under each goal?  
What would you like to see delivered?



## Our Vision is that in 2040, the City of Whittlesea is a place for all

In 2040, compassion is at the heart of our community. A compassionate community makes sure that everyone feels cared for and supported in a deep and meaningful way. It makes our city increasingly welcoming, whether you've just arrived or your family has been here for generations.

What that feels like is different for everyone. It might be having a job you like within easy reach or knowing your neighbour's name. Or maybe something even simpler, like hearing birds in the trees outside your window.

Our community offers a sense of place that includes everyone, where people from all walks of life are valued for who they are and the qualities they bring with them.

The City of Whittlesea is an inviting place to live with beautiful natural and urban spaces. We are proud to live here. The special blend of old and new – rural heritage and hospitality with just the right amount of urban convenience. The shops, schools and health services you need are around the corner, and the city is only an easy train or tram ride away.

Putting down roots is effortless and people have a shared belief that things will keep getting better as we grow. Community cohesion is deep and strong with the support of facilities and opportunities designed to make life more fulfilling, secure and inclusive.

By encouraging every new resident to add their own vibrant touch, our community is the place we envisaged, and even more welcoming in the decades to come.

## Integrated Planning Framework: Five Interconnected Goals

*Whittlesea 2040: A place for all* is our long-term vision for the City of Whittlesea, guiding everything we do, from daily operations to future partnerships with the community and others.

We're focused on making this vision a reality with five main goals:





**GOAL 1**

# Connected Community

We want to be a city that welcomes and includes everyone, and where we are inspired and work together to make it a better place.

We value feeling part of our community and the way people from all ages and backgrounds are accepted and celebrated, and we want this to be strengthened in the future.

We love participating in the wide range of activities, festivals and events that bring our community together and we want to continue to celebrate in the future through a great variety of affordable activities. We love our libraries, community centres and neighbourhood houses.

We hope that community infrastructure is available across the municipality, particularly in growth areas so sections of the community don't miss out.

We value our easy access to the doctor, hospitals and other health services, and in the future we hope for expanded or upgraded hospitals and a variety of medical, emergency and support services.

Our community has diverse support needs and while we currently value the services we have, we hope for a wider range and number to cater for more people and emerging challenges.

We love that our homes are safe, peaceful and close to friends and family. Feeling secure in our homes and neighbourhood is a priority for the future and we will look to the authorities to help reduce crime, support those who are vulnerable or troubled and ensure everyone feels safe at home and in public spaces.



## Key Directions



### 1.1 A socially cohesive community

**This means:**

- Friendly and welcoming
- Sense of community and belonging
- Embracing and celebrating diversity
- Opportunities to connect and build social networks



### 1.2 A healthy and safe community

**This means:**

- Good health and wellbeing
- Increased physical activity
- Access to health and support services
- Safety at home and in public



### 1.3 A participating community

**This means:**

- Well informed
- Local decision making
- Volunteering and leadership
- Vibrant community groups



## Our community said

“I love... Whittlesea Community Festival and playgroups”

– Resident, Epping, 9

“We hope to see a well-connected happy community and [deepened] sense of community”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“I hope to see stronger neighbourhood connections”

– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“I hope there are more events to connect cultures and neighbours”

– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“We would like safer public spaces through CCTV and improved lighting”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“We would like to see a welcome pack for new residents that introduces services and community groups of interest”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“We hope to have more events that connect community to each other including First Nations”

– Focus Group, 2025

“I love... that I feel valued in this municipality. Community involvement enhances my sense of belonging.”

– Resident, Epping, 20

“I love... that anyone can be anything they want here.”

– Resident, Whittlesea Township, 77



**GOAL 2**

# Liveable Neighbourhoods

We love that our neighbourhoods are beautiful, clean and tidy and many of the services and facilities we need are in easy reach of our homes.

We love that the things we need, like shops, schools, parks, sports facilities, playgrounds, libraries and community spaces are close by.

We hope that all these facilities are even better in the future, with upgrades to parks, new facilities and more attractions.

We hope to have access to a variety of quality homes that are affordable and suitable for our needs. We value our unique mix of busier, established suburbs, new neighbourhoods and rural areas, and it is extremely important to us that this mix remains as we grow.

We love that in some parts we have great access to public transport but we hope this network will be enhanced in the future to keep up with our growth. This includes extended networks, more frequent services and better transport links. We love the pathways, tracks and trails that mean we can ride or walk for leisure or to commute, but as we grow in the future these will need to be made safer and be better connected to public transport so we can choose not to drive.

We value that our roads are continually being maintained and extended and provide easy access to the city and airport, however growth is causing congestion. We hope to reduce traffic congestion and our impact on the environment by having other innovative travel options like share cars and electric vehicles.



## Key Directions



### 2.1 Smart, connected transport network

**This means:**

- Road networks that flow
- Well-connected public transport
- Paths and trails – walking and cycling



### 2.2 Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres

**This means:**

- Attractive streetscapes and public spaces
- Easy access to local shops and major commercial centres
- Access to quality local facilities, parks and amenity



### 2.3 Housing for diverse needs

**This means:**

- Quality and varied housing options
- Housing that is affordable and accessible



## Our community said

“The geographic location has good amenity and access to the services and transport options I need.”  
– Resident, Bundoora, 68

“I love... walking areas, parks and playgrounds.”  
– Resident, Epping, 48

“We hope for good local connected public transport to make it easier to commute within the local area”  
– Focus Group, April, 2025

“Better road connections from East to West”  
– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“Places you can go for a walk and have a coffee in open spaces”  
– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“3D printed infrastructure”  
– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“The fact it is still country but close to shopping centres, supermarket, fast food. Where we live is very community focused which I love.”  
– Resident, Mernda, 43



**GOAL 3**

# Strong Local Economy

We really value our local businesses for the services they provide and the opportunities they create for us to work locally.

We hope that growth in local business in the future will provide more local jobs for people of all ages and skills.

We look forward to new business growth as a result of technology and investment. We hope to reduce the need to travel altogether through local employment and working from home.

We hope for more local, quality education facilities and programs, from kindergarten through to tertiary and adult learning, and that this will create opportunities and cater for our growing population and their unique learning needs.

We love the variety of products and dining options we get at our local shops, shopping centres and markets and we hope these can be expanded, upgraded and open longer hours in the future. We also hope to see smaller retail outlets flourish with unique products and local produce.



## Key Directions



### 3.1 Increased local employment

**This means:**

- Residents employed locally
- Variety of jobs to meet local needs
- Job seeker and employment support



### 3.2 Education opportunities for all

**This means:**

- Local access to quality education and lifelong learning
- Flexible training and skills for jobs
- Community engaged in learning



### 3.3 Successful, innovative local businesses

**This means:**

- Local business investment and growth
- Local producers, enterprises and start ups
- Variety of local services, trades and commercial centres



## Our community said

“We hope for thriving small business community”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“Location is perfect to commute to the city. Good small businesses for restaurants and community/culture specific avenues.”  
– Resident, Mill Park, 38

“We would like to see leadership programs to build confidence, employability and networking”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“Better work readiness through school”  
– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“More co-working spaces”  
– Focus Group Member, April 2025

“I love...the education opportunities, the different types of schools”  
– Youth Council Focus Group Member, April 2025

“...economic and social growth opportunities...”  
– Resident, Donnybrook, 39

“We hope for job opportunities close to home”  
– Focus Group, April 2025



**GOAL 4**

# Sustainable Environment

We highly value our natural spaces; our trees, landscapes, waterways and the wildlife around us.

Our strong hope for the future is that we maintain, enhance and protect our natural environments through prioritising habitat corridors and significant areas and making sure new development respects its surrounds. Our leafy and green neighbourhoods with many trees and gardens must be maintained in the future.

We love having access to beautiful parks and we feel great being socially and physically active outdoors.

We hope that people of all ages and abilities continue to enjoy a variety of clean, dog and family-friendly parklands, trails and reserves in the future.

We hope to continue to enjoy the clear air and fresh, local produce by being a community that is more conscious and active in living in a clean and sustainable way. We hope that in the future we are a leading example of a community working together to reduce our impact on the environment.



## Key Directions



### 4.1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity

**This means:**

- Protect and improve local biodiversity
- Sustainable land management
- Appreciation of local natural environment



### 4.2 Climate ready

**This means:**

- More trees for cooling and shelter
- Infrastructure built to withstand the changing climate
- Building community resilience



### 4.3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living

**This means:**

- Reduce waste and increase recycling
- Reduce energy use and carbon emissions
- Renewable energy
- Water efficiency



## Our community said

“I love that City of Whittlesea is environmentally diverse”  
– Youth Council Focus Group Member, April 2025

“I love... the natural resources and parks – Plenty Gorge is lovely...”  
– Resident, South Morang, 41

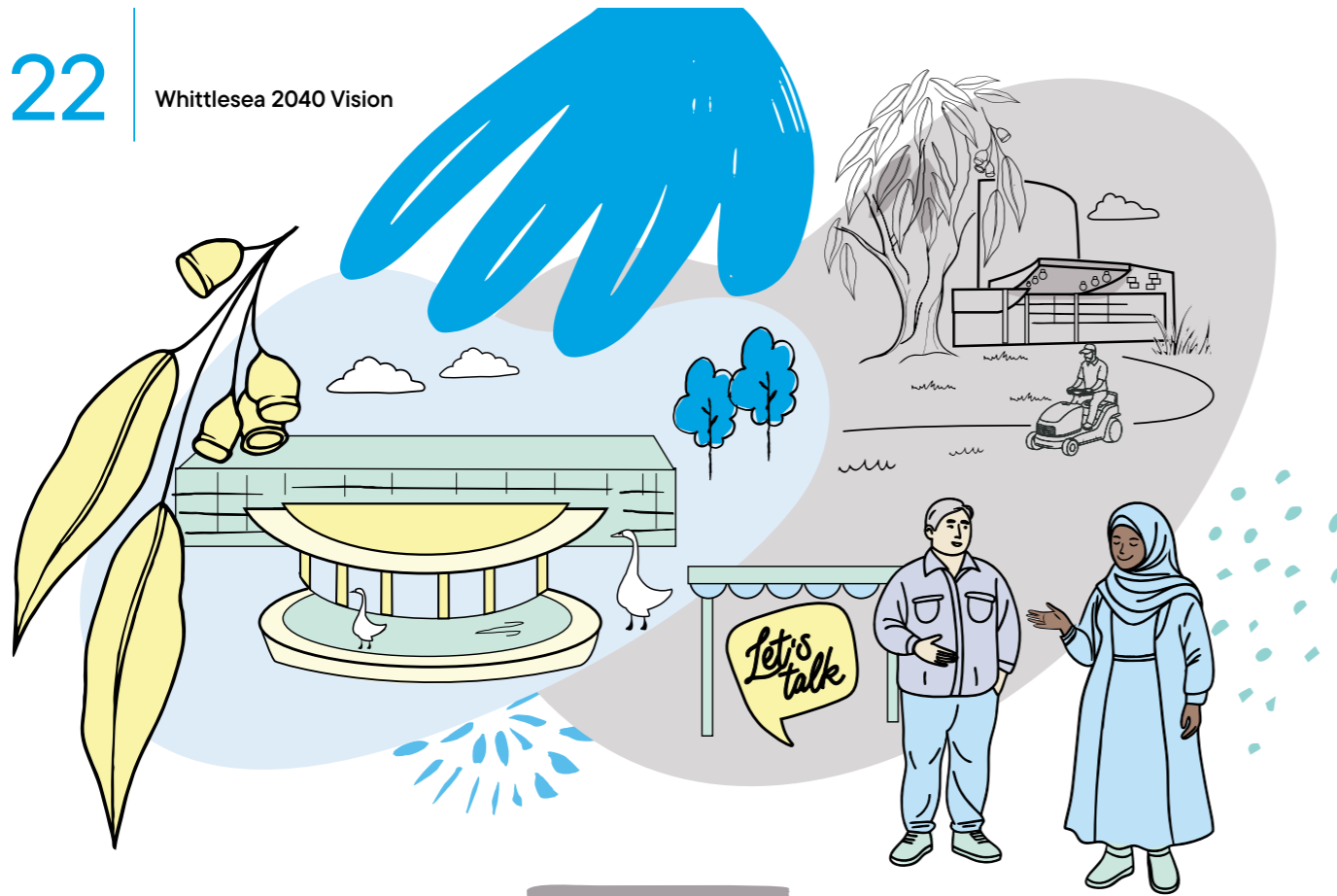
“Increase our green spaces with a variety of appropriate trees”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“We would like to see City of Whittlesea invest and promote renewable energy”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“Improved e-waste services”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“Promotion to help make business more sustainable”  
– Focus Group, April 2025

“I love... the diverse landscape and cultural heritage.”  
– Resident, Wollert, 40



**GOAL 5**

# High Performing Organisation

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

The City of Whittlesea is responsible for enabling the rapid growth and development of our region, meeting the ever-expanding needs of our community, and maintaining a commitment to excellence as they serve our municipality.

We value our Council being innovative, adopting new technology and planning strategically to meet the needs and priorities of an ageing population and a growing number of families. Our resources need to be utilised wisely, to remain financially sustainable and manage our existing and planned assets to an appropriate level of service into the future. Using local approaches to Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery, we hope our Council will be responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities.

We value our Councillors and Council officers making evidence informed decisions, aligning operations with community needs and priorities, and providing transparency around resources and services. We love being informed and engaged through a variety of channels and encouraged to participate in local democracy, offer solutions and lead initiatives that will make a difference to our community. Our Council needs to be easy to connect with, offering a great customer experience when delivering all infrastructure, services and programs across the municipality.

We hope the City of Whittlesea will advocate and build relationships with other levels of government and other stakeholders to seek investment and reforms necessary for our community as we make the City of Whittlesea a place for all.



## Key Directions



### 5.1 Driving better community outcomes

**This means:**

- Council values and responds to needs of communities
- Community members find it easy to interact with Council
- Community members are informed about Council services, programs and activities



### 5.2 More informed Council decisions

**This means:**

- Decisions are informed and made in the best interest of the community
- Our community has confidence in Council
- Our communities engage with us on issues that affect them



### 5.3 More cost-effective investment

**This means:**

- We have the right people in the right roles to deliver for the community
- Our community is confident Council can fund community needs into the future
- Our assets meet community needs now and in the future



## Our community said

“We would like to see Council consult with community before making decisions and set spending based on community feedback.”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“A “no wrong door” policy (and lived experience) when interacting with council”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“Council communicates how finances were spent and are transparent about any mismanagement”

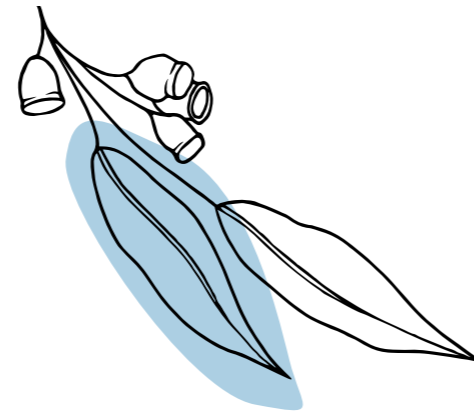
– Focus Group, April 2025

“We hope Council is connected to the community and responsive to changing needs”

– Focus Group, April 2025

“Council staff are diverse and reflective of the diverse community they serve”

– Focus Group Member, April 2025



## Priority Indicators

We will monitor our progress towards the Vision using the following priority indicators. These will be reported against each year in the Annual Report.

Connected Community			
	Key direction	Outcome indicator	Measure
1	1.1 A socially cohesive community	Social cohesion	Residents average rating of social connection in the community
2	1.2 A healthy and safe community	Physical activity	Percent of residents who do moderate to vigorous exercise for at least 2.5 hours a week
3	1.2 A healthy and safe community	Mental health	Percent of residents who report that they experience high or very high levels of psychological distress
4	1.2 A healthy and safe community	Safety in public areas	Percent of residents who feel safe in their local neighbourhood
5	1.3 A participating community	Civic Participation	Percent of residents who got involved in activities to influence decision makers

Liveable Neighbourhoods			
	Key direction	Outcome indicator	Measure
6	2.1 Smart, connected transport network	Commuter travel time	Percent of workers who spent at least 90 minutes getting to and from work each day
7	2.1 Smart, connected transport network	Ease of walking and cycling	Household rating for ease of local walking and cycling
8	2.2 Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres	Access to open space	Percent of households located within 400m of neighbourhood open space (minimum 1 ha)
9	2.2 Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres	Access to services and facilities	Level of household satisfaction with access to services and facilities
10	2.3 Housing for diverse needs	Housing affordability	Percent of housing affordable to very low and low-income households (divided into purchase and rent)

Strong Local Economy			
	Key direction	Outcome indicator	Measure
11	3.1 Increased local employment	Local jobs	Ratio of local jobs to residents in the workforce
12	3.2 Education opportunities for all	Access to education	Level of household satisfaction with access to suitable local education options
13	3.3 Successful, innovative local businesses	Gross Regional Product	Value of City of Whittlesea's local economy (Bn \$ per capita)

Sustainable Environment			
	Key direction	Outcome indicator	Measure
14	4.1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity	Biodiversity Protection	Hectares of on ground biodiversity actions
15	4.2 Climate ready	Tree canopy coverage	Percent of tree shade across the City of Whittlesea, divided into urban and rural areas
16	4.2 Climate ready	Carbon emissions	Total carbon emissions produced across the City of Whittlesea and total emissions per capita
17	4.3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living	Waste diversion	Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill

High Performing Organisation			
	Key direction	Outcome indicator	Measure
18	5.1 Driving better community outcomes through improved service access, satisfaction and advocacy	Community satisfaction with Council decision-making	Community satisfaction with Council decision-making
19	5.1 Driving better community outcomes through improved service access, satisfaction and advocacy	Customer satisfaction	Percentage of customer interactions that customers rated positively
20	5.2 More informed Council decisions based on strong advice and community consultation and engagement	Community Engagement	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement
21	5.3 More cost-effective investment through better return on investment, efficiency and an engaged workforce	Financial sustainability	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue
22	5.3 More cost-effective investment through better return on investment, efficiency and an engaged workforce	Workforce Engagement	Overall staff 'favourable score' on annual Staff Engagement Survey

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Whittlesea 2040 Vision





**COUNCIL OFFICES**

Civic Centre  
25 Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 8.30am–5pm

**Whittlesea Services Hub**

63 Church Street,  
Whittlesea VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 9.30am–5pm

**Telephone** 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

**Postal address**

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📘 [facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea](https://facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea)

📷 [CityWhittlesea](https://www.instagram.com/CityWhittlesea)

City of Whittlesea

# COMMUNITY PLAN

## 2025 – 2029

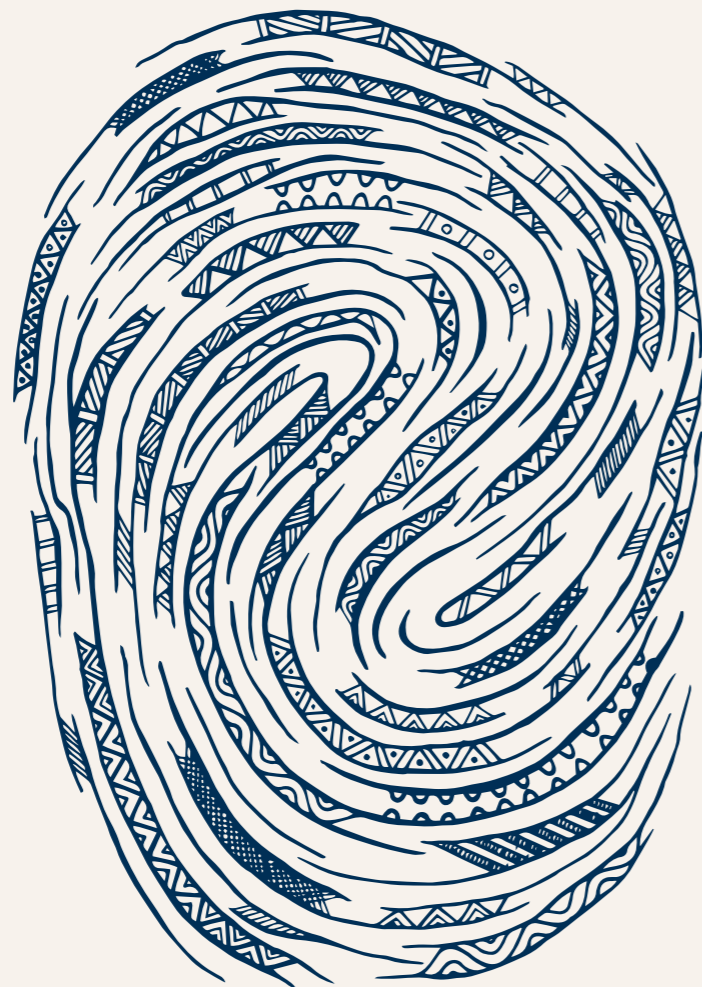
*Incorporating the Municipal Public and Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan*



City of  
Whittlesea

Whittlesea  
**2040**

*A place for all*



Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017

## Acknowledgement

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

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. This Country offered more than just sustenance; it provided fresh water, food, shelter and a thriving environment rich with fish and birdlife.

For countless generations, Country offered places of living and 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

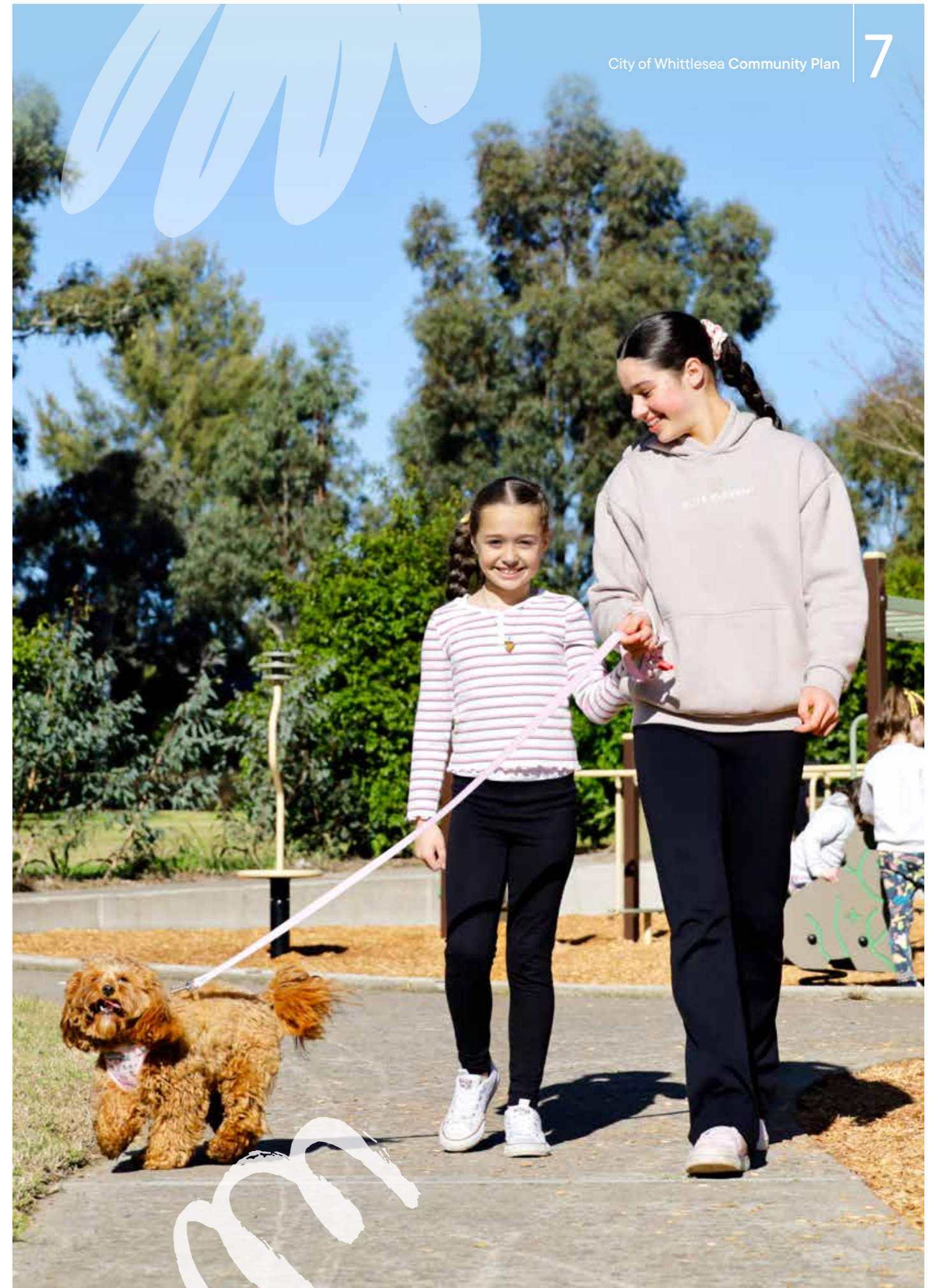
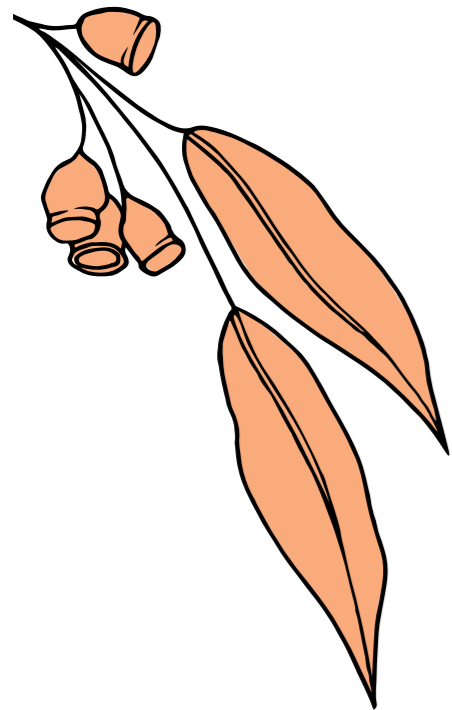
As the level of government closest to the community, local government plays a vital role in delivering services, facilities and programs that reflect the unique needs and aspirations of local people.

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

## Whittlesea's 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.

## First Peoples cultural landscape

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.

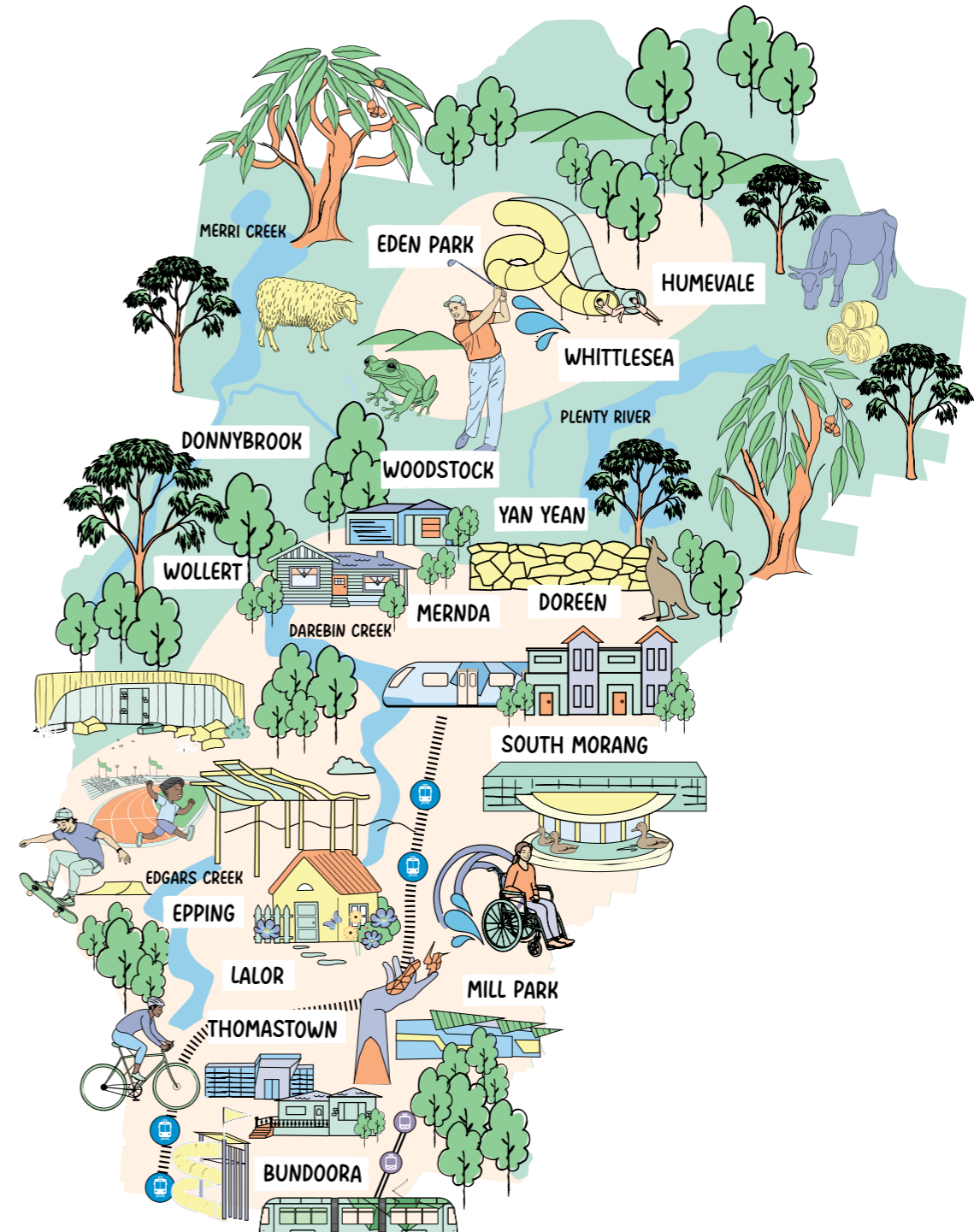
## Growth, diversity and our future

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



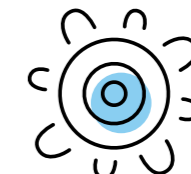
Our population continues to grow  
A population of **257,000** in 2025, projected to be **355,000** by 2040 – a 38% increase.<sup>1</sup>



We're home to many young families  
**54%** of households are families with children. **27%** of the population is under 19.<sup>3</sup>



We have a growing older population  
**17%** of our population is over 60.<sup>1</sup> Our median age is expected to shift from 35 to 39 by 2040.<sup>4</sup>



We have a growing First Peoples population  
**38%** increase from 2016 to 2021<sup>2</sup>



We're a diverse and multicultural community  
**37.6%** of residents were born overseas<sup>2</sup> and **45%** speak a language other than English at home.<sup>2</sup>



Discrimination is impacting the lives of many in our community  
**More than half** of First Peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse residents have experienced racism<sup>5</sup>. **1 in 10** Australians experience discrimination because of a disability.

<sup>1</sup> Population projections for City of Whittlesea from .id, 2024

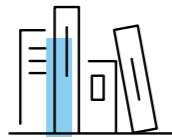
<sup>2</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Population forecast, Place Info Pty Ltd, 2025

<sup>4</sup> Population forecast, Place Info Pty Ltd, 2025

<sup>5</sup> 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 and **10,000+** people played sport at Council facilities.



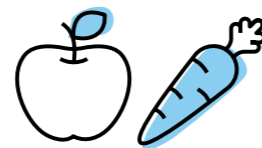
Our physical activity levels are comparatively low

**32%** of residents meet global physical activity guidelines.<sup>6</sup>



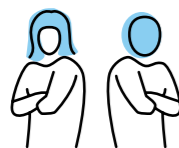
Demand for mental health support is rising

Almost **1 in 5** residents over the age of 18 sought professional mental health support in 2023.<sup>7</sup>



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.<sup>8</sup>



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.<sup>9</sup>



Gambling losses are significant

On average, **\$2.6 million** is lost per week on Electronic Gaming Machines.<sup>10</sup>



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%**



More people are experiencing homelessness

People sleeping rough and experiencing homelessness has increased by **150%** over the last 20 years.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p150  
<sup>7</sup> North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p132  
<sup>8</sup> North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU), Population Profile of the NEPHU Catchment Area 2025, p167

<sup>9</sup> City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.3, 2024  
<sup>10</sup> Crime Statistics Agency, Family Violence Dashboard, 2024  
<sup>11</sup> VGCCC, Monthly LGA EGM Expenditure, Monthly expenditure data by Local Government Area (LGA) - Report | vgccc.vic.gov.au  
<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup>



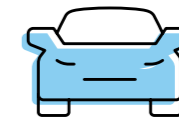
Demand for affordable housing is growing

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



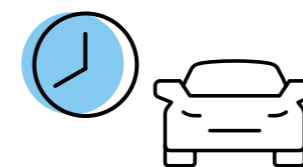
We have a wide range of neighbourhood types

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 car.<sup>15</sup>



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.<sup>17</sup>



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.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Dwelling Projections for City of Whittlesea, from .id, 2024  
<sup>14</sup> Affordable Housing Need, compiled by .id, 2024  
<sup>15</sup> Affordable Housing Need, compiled by .id, 2024

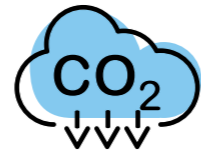
<sup>16</sup> City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.1, 2024  
<sup>17</sup> City of Whittlesea, Community Insights Survey, Wave 1.2, 2024  
<sup>18</sup> AIHW, People with and Disability in Australia, 2018.

## 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%**.



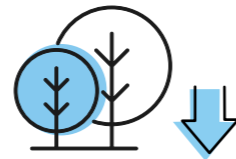
Greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality have decreased

**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.<sup>21</sup>



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%**.<sup>22</sup>



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).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> City of Whittlesea, Waste Team, 2025

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

<sup>21</sup> State of the Climate 2022, Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO

<sup>22</sup> Greening Whittlesea Strategy 2020-2040, 2021

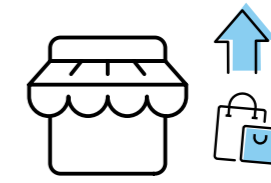
<sup>23</sup> Australian Urban Observatory, City of Whittlesea Liveability Index Scorecard, 2021 and 2024.

## 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.<sup>24</sup>



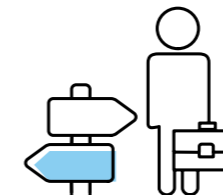
The number of local jobs is increasing

Almost **82,000** local jobs in 2022-23, a **19%** increase since 2017-18.<sup>25</sup>



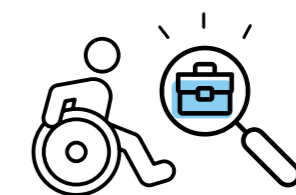
The highest employing sectors are

Healthcare and Social Assistance: **17.8%**  
Construction: **13.4%**  
Retail: **11.5%**  
Manufacturing: **11.1%**<sup>26</sup>



Many residents work outside the municipality

**63%** of working residents commute to other areas.<sup>27</sup>



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.<sup>28</sup>

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

<sup>25</sup> NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy .id by .id

<sup>26</sup> NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy .id by .id

<sup>27</sup> NIEIR, 2023, compiled and presented in economy.id by .id


<sup>28</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .id


# Community voices have shaped this plan

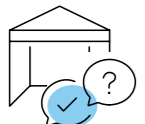
In 2024 and early 2025, we invited our community to dream big and share what matters most for the future of the City of Whittlesea. More than 1,339 people took part; online, in person and through focus groups, offering their ideas, hopes and priorities for the years ahead.

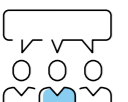
4,181 community comments helped shape this plan


## How we engaged


- 


**793** in-person surveys completed
- 

**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
- 

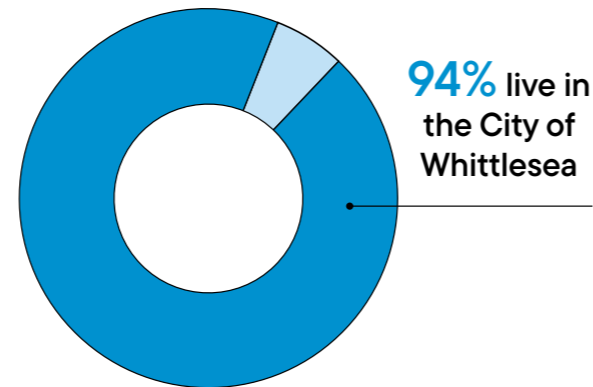
**Community focus groups** across the municipality in Lalor, South Morang and Whittlesea township held with representative cohorts
- 

**504 surveys** completed online at [engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au](https://engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au)
- 

**Workshops and meetings with key stakeholders**
- 

**Multi-channel communications campaign**

## Of those who participated in community engagement:

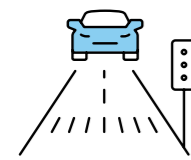


- 15% from Thomastown
- 10% from Doreen
- 10% from Mill Park
- 9% from Epping
- 9% from Lalor
- 9% from Mernda
- 9% from Whittlesea township
- 9% from Wollert
- 7% from South Morang
- 5% from Bundoora
- 3% from Donnybrook
- 16% people indicated they are a person with a disability or an unpaid carer of a person with a disability or an older person
- 2% identified as First Peoples
- 6% identified as members of the LGBTIQ+ community
- 58% speak a language other than English at home

Whittlesea 2040 - "A place for all."

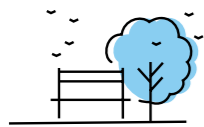


# What you told us was important to you



### 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

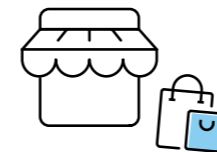
You want us to prioritise safety. Lighting, education and enforcement of local laws were key themes, along with strong support for programs that prevent violence against women, supporting safer school crossings and providing immunisation services.



### 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:



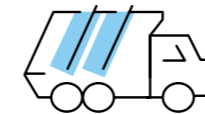
### Support for local business

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.



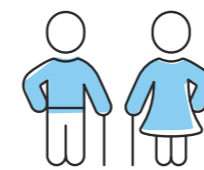
### Youth services

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.



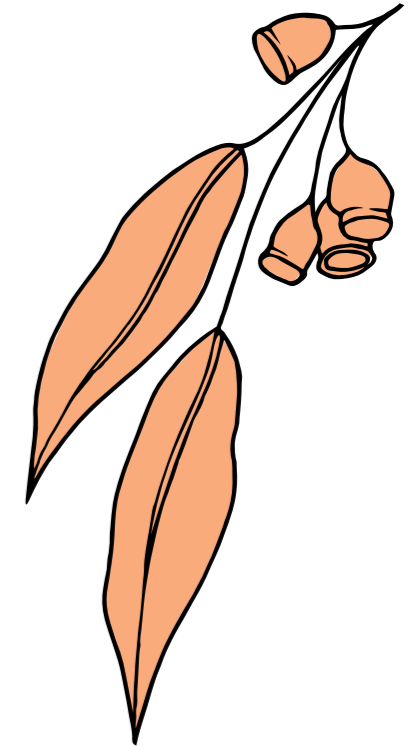
### Ageing well

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



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.

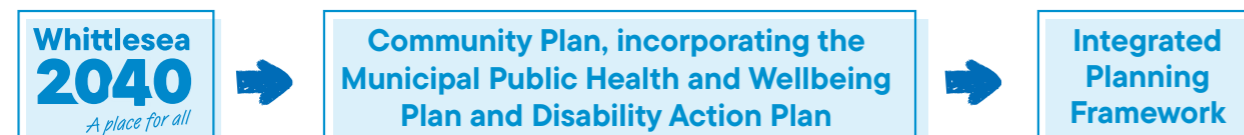
This vision paints a picture of a compassionate and inclusive community where people feel supported, connected and proud to call the City of Whittlesea home. It’s a place where the simple things matter - feeling safe, knowing your neighbours, or having work and services close by. Whether you’ve lived 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.

# 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.



# 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.

## THEME 1:

As I enter my later years, 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.”

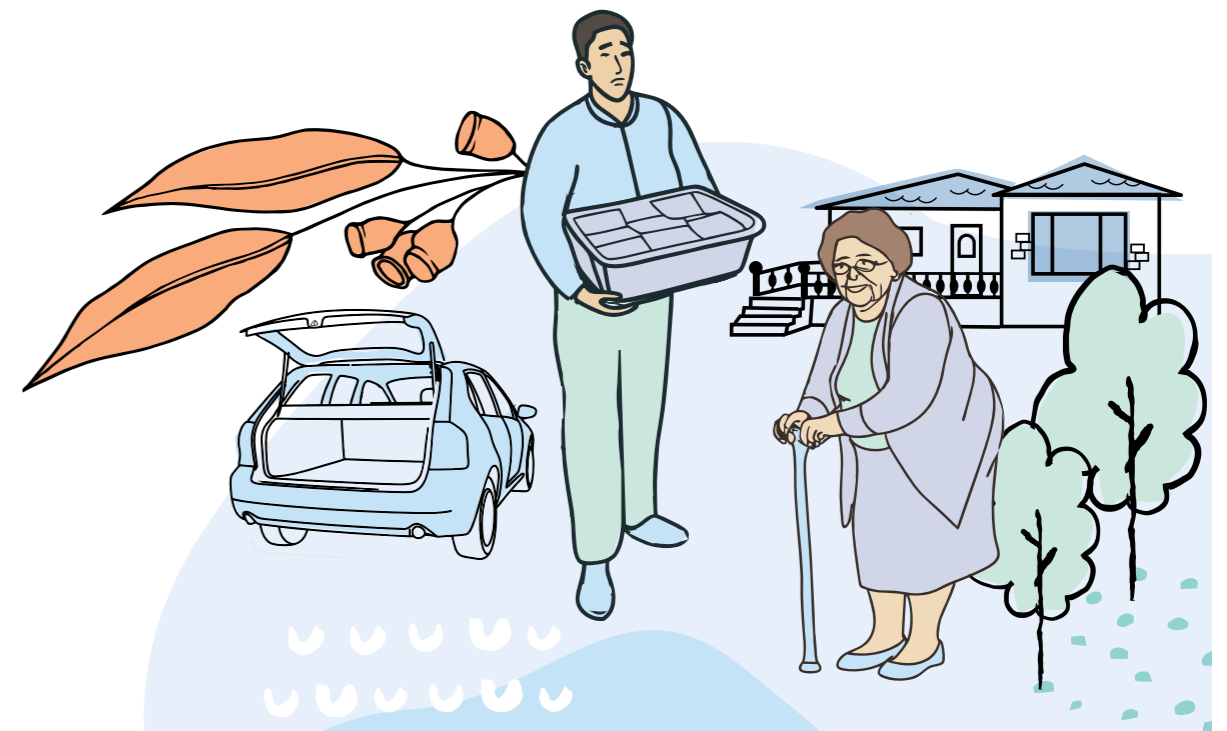
### Strategic priorities

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 priorities

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 Program for Younger People (HACC PYP).
- 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 priorities**

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.	HP	DAP
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.	HP	DAP

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 priorities

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

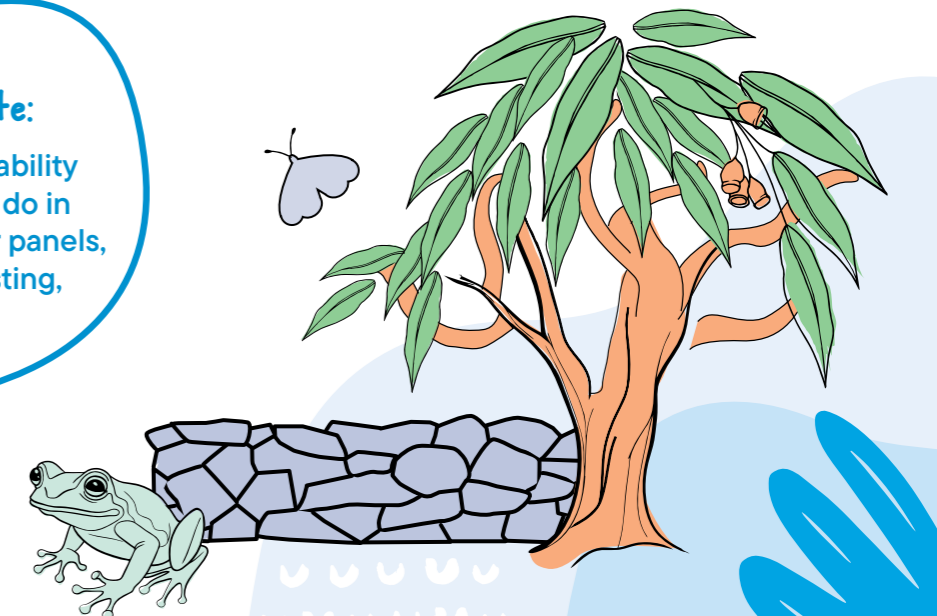
HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

### 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 priorities

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

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### 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 priorities

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

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### 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 warramburra 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."



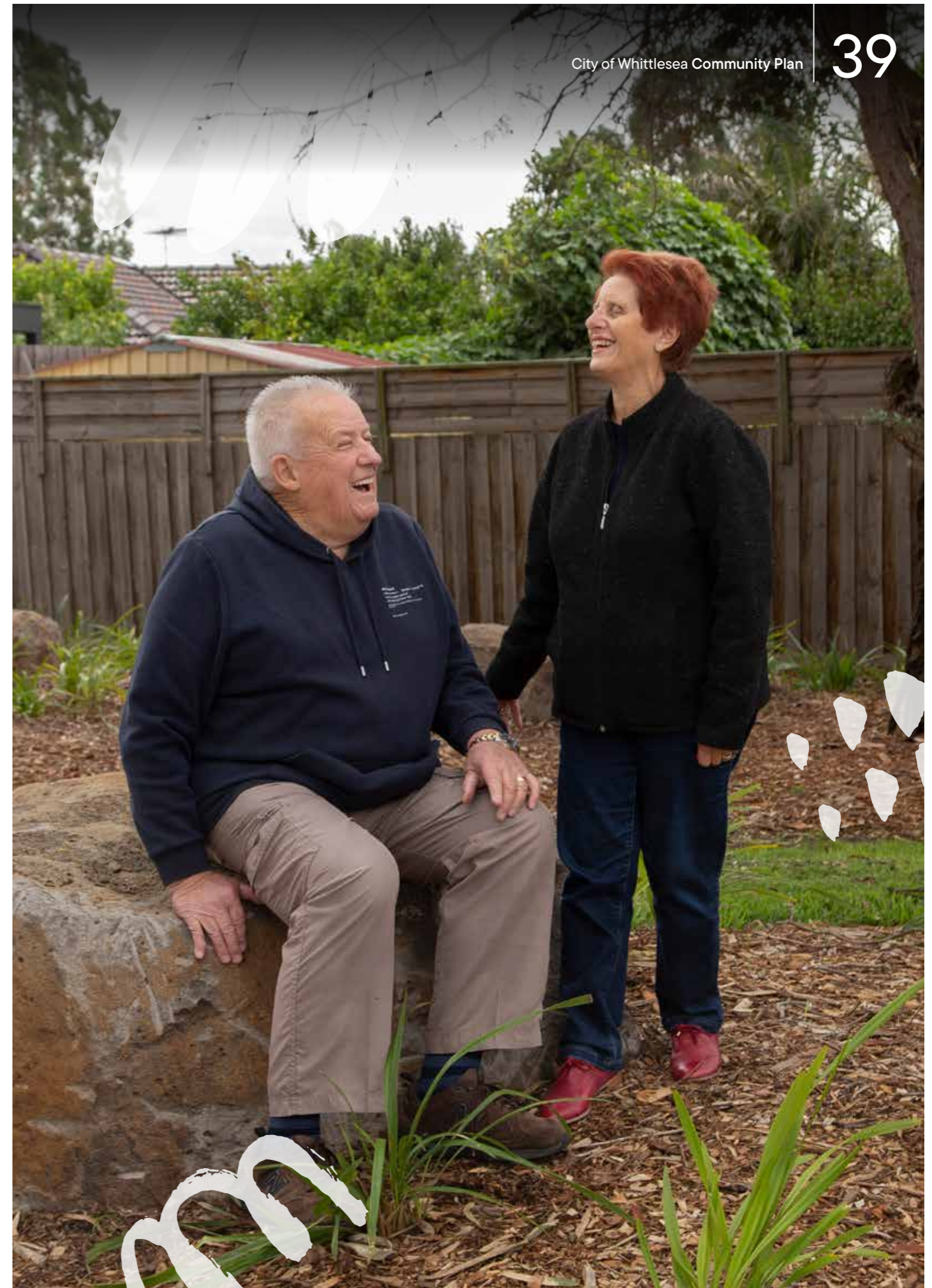
**Strategic priorities**

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

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**Responsibility of others**

Service or program by others	Who
Noise, air and light pollution coming from private property	Environmental Protection Authority Victoria
Enforcing laws against crimes and criminal behaviour	Victoria Police
Enforcing laws against anti-social behaviour such as hoon driving and speeding	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 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.

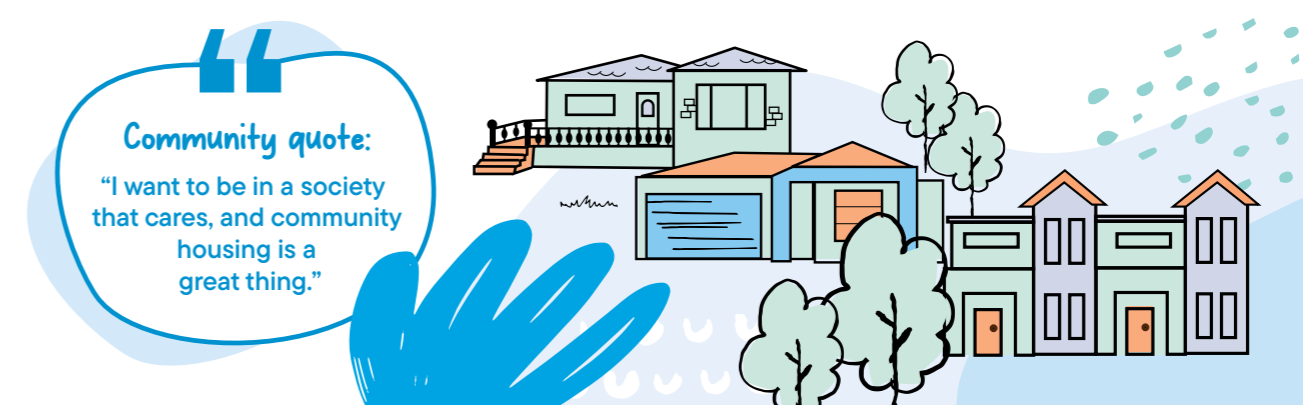
### Strategic priorities

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

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### 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



## 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.

**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."

### Strategic priorities

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

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### 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

**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, grassroots 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.



**Strategic priorities**

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

HP Health Plan      DAP 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 priorities

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

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.

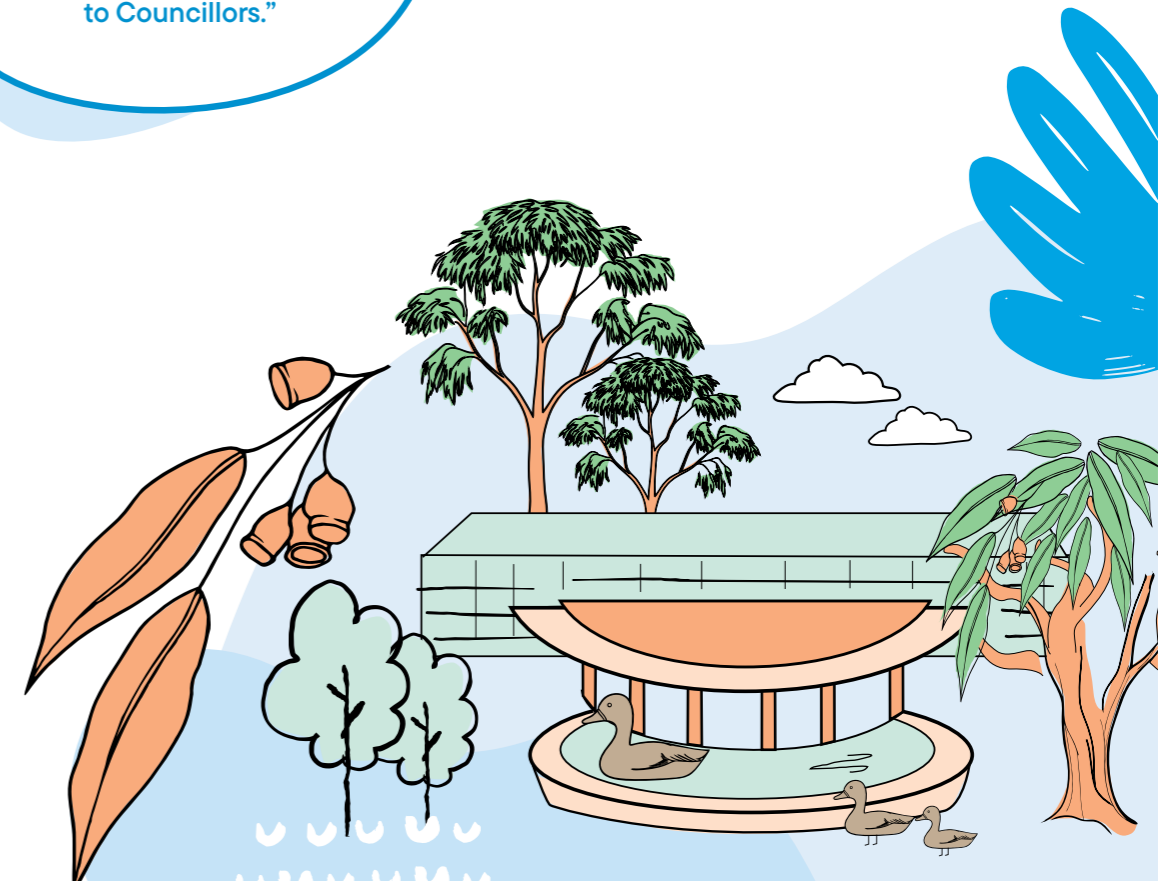
### Strategic priorities

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

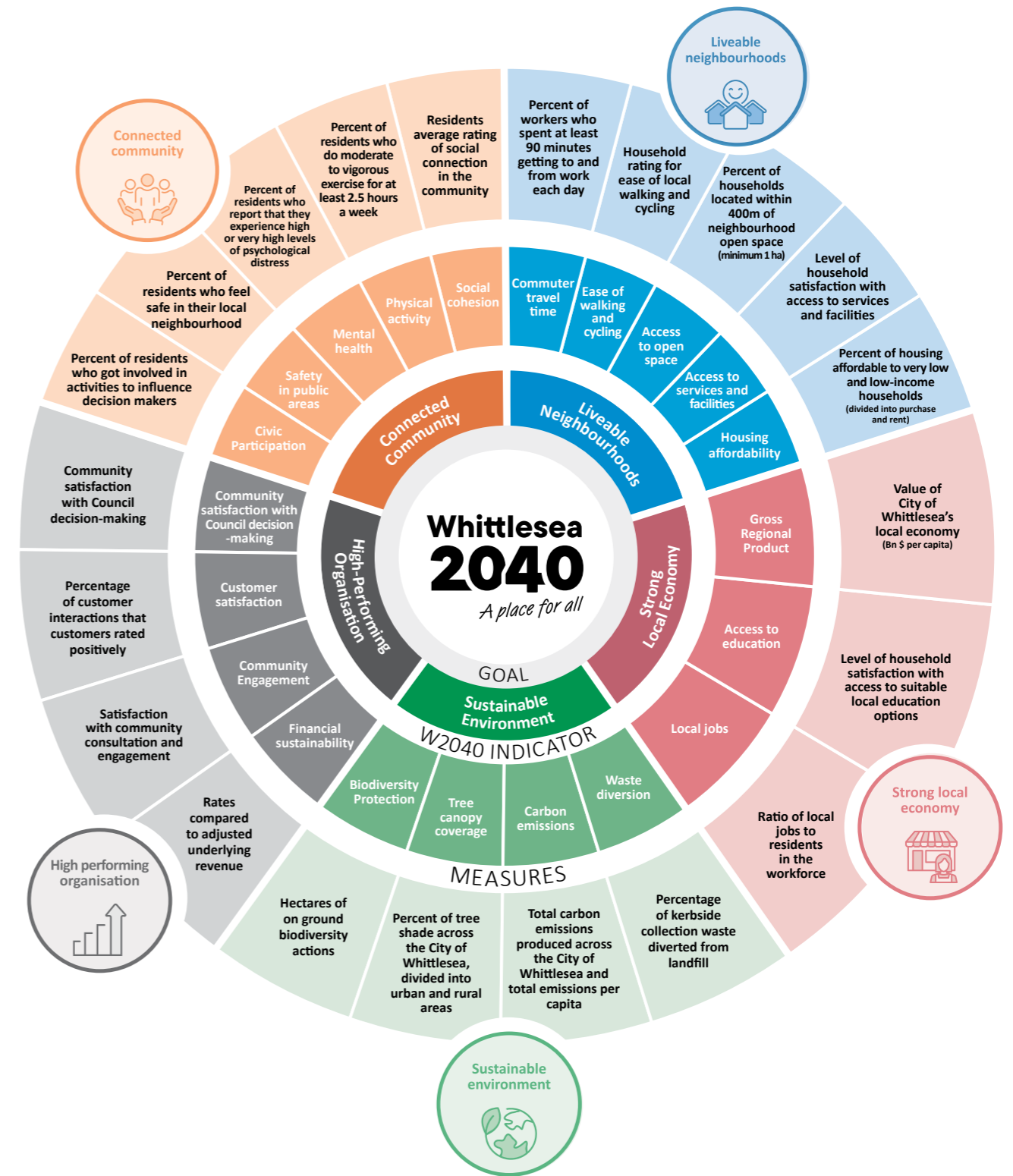
In our long-term vision, *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*, Council has a clear picture of what we want to achieve. It sets the direction of Council's work and future partnerships with the community and others and ensures Council is responding to community need now and in the future.

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.

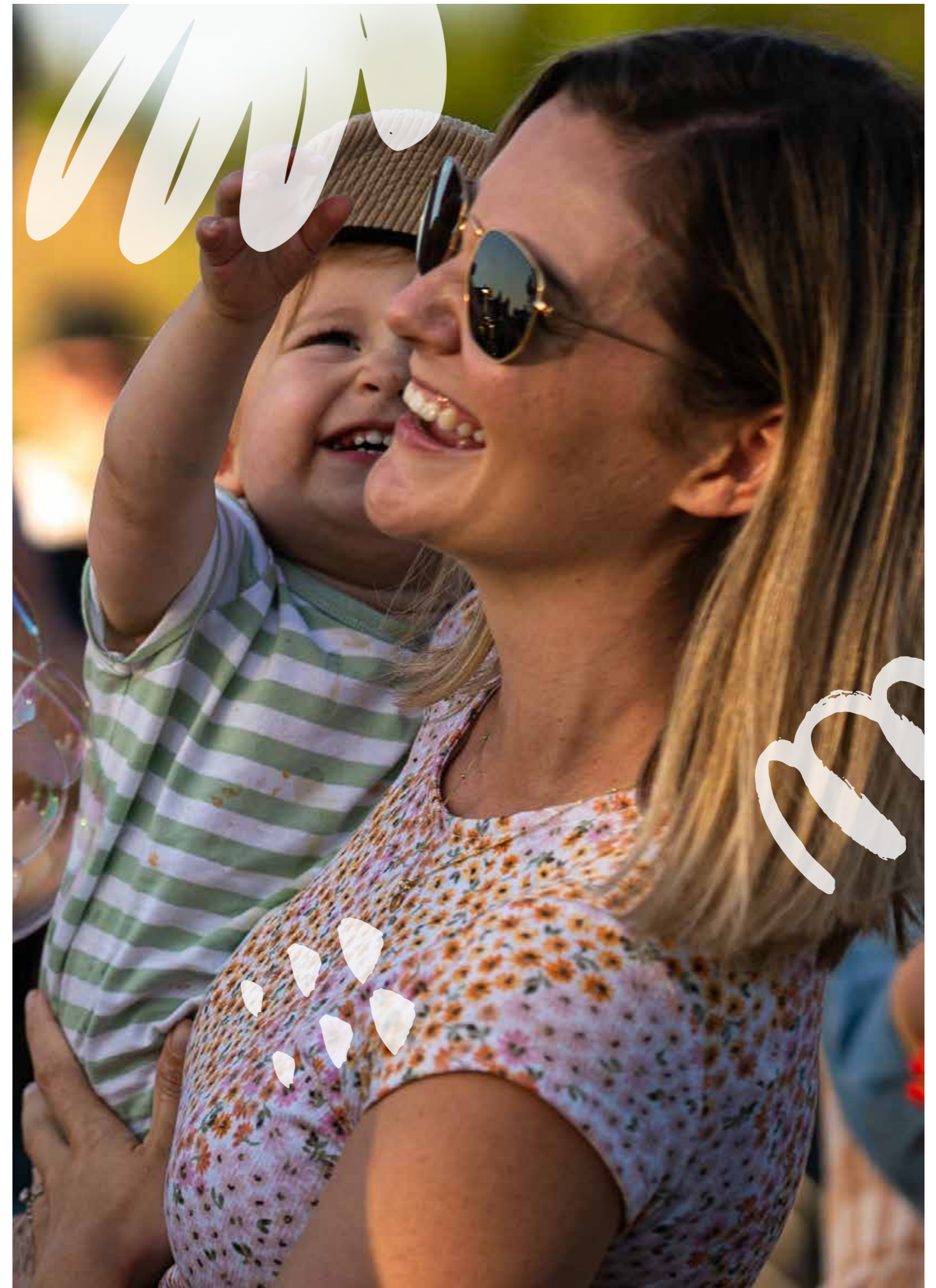
Together, we're building a stronger, more inclusive and connected community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



## Appendices

- APPENDIX 1** Our story and suburbs
- APPENDIX 2** Alignment with Integrated Planning Framework (IPF)
- APPENDIX 3** Supporting evidence
- APPENDIX 4** Linkages to the Municipal 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**

63 Church Street,  
Whittlesea VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 9.30am-5pm

**Telephone** 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

**Postal address**

Locked Bag 1, Bundoora MDC, VIC 3083

 [info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

 [whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

 [facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea](https://facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea)

 [CityWhittlesea](https://www.instagram.com/CityWhittlesea)

September 2025

 Printed on 100% recycled paper

City of Whittlesea

# COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

2025 – 2026



Whittlesea  
**2040**  
*A place for all*



Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017

## Acknowledgement

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

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. This Country offered more than just sustenance; it provided fresh water, food, shelter and a thriving environment rich with fish and birdlife.

For countless generations, Country offered places of living and 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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# About this plan

The Community Action Plan 2025–26 (CAP) sets out the actions Council will focus on delivering in the first year of the Community Plan 2025–29. The Community Action Plan 2025–26 is the first annual supplement to the Community Plan 2025–29. It articulates the community and internal facing outcomes that set our strategic direction and these actions are prioritised for delivery in the financial year 2025–26. The Action Plan plays a pivotal role in working towards the vision and strategic direction embedded in Whittlesea 2040 and the Community Plan 2025–29. Progress on this Community Action Plan will be reported on and shared with the community.



# Council's role



**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.

# Connected Community



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### A socially cohesive community

Actions	
<b>Outcome: All members of our community feel that they belong, are valued and respected</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 17:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 1:</b>	Deliver education modules to sports clubs and undertake an Expression of Interest for usage of the Regional Sports Precinct as part of the implementation of Council's Fair Access Policy.
<b>Strategic priority 44:</b>	Support service providers to expand initiatives that promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in community life, employment and education. <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 2:</b>	Support service providers to develop a work readiness program that will engage local employers and community organisations to build awareness and capacity to create viable work and volunteer opportunities for young people with disability.
<b>Outcome: Our community strengthens connections between diverse cultures</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 4:</b>	Deliver and facilitate culturally safe services and programs for First Peoples children and their families, suited to local needs. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 3:</b>	Provide First Peoples children and their families with culturally responsive local family engagement opportunities.
<b>Outcome: Our community shares stories and learns from one another</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 49:</b>	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> . <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 4:</b>	Continue to consider the future arrangements for the delivery of Library Services, including opportunities for collaboration with other Councils.
<b>Outcome: Our community values and respects First Peoples and celebrates their rich, diverse cultures</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 39:</b>	Partner with First Peoples communities to co-design and deliver programs and activities at the Aboriginal Gathering Place throughout the municipality that support social, physical, cultural, emotional and wellbeing needs. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 5:</b>	Partner with First Peoples communities to co-design and establish programs and activities at the Aboriginal Gathering Place.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### A healthy and safe community

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our community is healthy, well and physically active</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 19:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 6:</b>	Continue construction of Stage 2 of the Regional Sports Precinct including the indoor stadium and outdoor netball courts.
<b>Strategic priority 20:</b>	Deliver the new Wollert Sports Reserve consisting of playing fields with lighting, multi-purpose sporting spaces, playground, car parking and a community pavilion. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 7:</b>	Commence the design of a new sports reserve in Wollert (Alkira).
<b>Strategic priority 21:</b>	Deliver the Huskisson Reserve Multi-Purpose Facility in Lalor consisting of new multi-purpose community pavilion and redevelopment of the existing tennis courts into new courts with lighting, car parking, pathways and landscaping. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 8:</b>	Commence the redevelopment of the Huskisson Recreation Reserve sports facilities with fencing and lighting, a new community sports pavilion, additional car parking, connecting paths and landscaping.
<b>Strategic priority 22:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 9:</b>	Complete design of a natural turf sports oval and synthetic cricket wicket with lighting, netball courts with fencing and lighting, community sports pavilion, additional car parking, connecting paths, passive open space and landscaping.
<b>Strategic priority 23:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 10:</b>	Complete design of soccer pitches with lighting, community sports pavilion, playground, additional car parking, connecting paths, passive open space and landscaping.
<b>Strategic priority 42:</b>	Facilitate local services to improve access to fresh, healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food; respond to food insecurity and promote healthy eating. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 11:</b>	Advocate and partner for better access to fresh, healthy, safe, affordable and culturally appropriate food systems to increase healthy eating.
<b>Outcome: Our children and young people are supported to thrive</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 3:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 12:</b>	Develop a Kindergarten Position Paper for Council endorsement that outlines Council's future role in implementing the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life Reform.
<b>Strategic priority 5:</b>	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. <span>HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 13:</b>	Advocate for funding to develop a dedicated youth hub and youth-friendly spaces for middle years and young people, providing access to services, programs and support.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

KEY DIRECTION 2

A healthy and safe community

Outcome: Our children and young people are supported to thrive

**Strategic priority 50:** 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

**Action 14:** Continue construction of the West Wollert Community Centre.

**Strategic priority 51:** 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

**Action 15:** Complete the construction of the Murnong Community Centre and commence operations of the new community facility including a library.

Outcome: Our community experiences financial wellbeing

**Strategic priority 40:** Facilitate increased awareness and advocate about the risks of gambling harm in the City of Whittlesea. HP DAP

**Action 16:** Partner with health providers to develop local awareness about gambling harm.

**Strategic priority 41:** Advocate for and facilitate the expansion of local services for individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk. HP DAP

**Action 17:** Partner with external agencies to pilot a homelessness outreach program.

Outcome: Our community feels safe and supported

**Strategic priority 43:** Advocate for and facilitate improved access to mental health services and partner to raise awareness and deliver preventative programs. HP DAP

**Action 18:** Partner with local organisations to increase access to services that are culturally safe, inclusive and accessible to diverse communities including marginalised groups.

**Strategic priority 48:** 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

**Action 19:** Deliver a feasibility study on the development of an accessible neighbourhood pilot project to better meet the needs for people living with a significant disability and their carers.

Outcome: Our community experiences healthy, equal and respectful relationships, and live free from abuse and family violence

**Strategic priority 30:** 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

**Action 20:** Partner with local health services to pilot a program that engages men to help stop gender-based violence and promote gender equity.

Outcome: Our community is prepared and able to respond to and recover from emergencies

**Strategic priority 29:** 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

**Action 21:** Deliver a feasibility assessment for a Safer Neighbourhoods Expo to enhance community education and awareness of available services.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



# Liveable Neighbourhoods



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Smart, connected transport network

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our community has options to easily travel where they need to go</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 6:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 22:</b>	Complete design for Edgars Creek Shared Path from Main Street to Kingsway Drive, Lalor.
<b>Action 23:</b>	Commence construction of the Yan Yean Shared Path from Childs Road to Centenary Drive, Mill Park.
<b>Strategic priority 8:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 24:</b>	Commence design for the signalisation of the intersection of Findon Road and The Great Eastern Way to improve safety, ease congestion and improve local access to surrounding community facilities.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### Well designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our neighbourhoods are attractive and desirable places to live, work and play</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 18:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 25:</b>	Complete the Granite Hills Playground featuring an adventure park and playground, open-air pavilion, public barbecues, giant slides, nature and water play, boardwalks and connecting paths, landscaping and public toilets with a Changing Places facility.
<b>Strategic priority 28:</b>	Deliver the Suburb Place Frameworks to enhance the municipality's distinct character, improve safety, enhance public spaces and upgrade infrastructure. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 26:</b>	Complete the Mill Park Place Framework identifying opportunities to address the distinct needs for the area, including safer streets, enhanced public places and improved infrastructure and develop an implementation action plan.
<b>Strategic priority 31:</b>	Deliver revitalised and upgraded neighbourhood streetscapes and shopping precincts to enhance accessibility, local character and support local spending. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 27:</b>	Commence the upgrade of The Boulevard Shops in Thomastown including tree planting, garden beds, improved pedestrian footpaths, reconfigured car parking, raised pedestrian crossings, road resurfacing and improved drainage.
<b>Strategic priority 32:</b>	Deliver a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls achieve high quality design and sustainable development outcomes. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 28:</b>	Commence a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls continue to deliver high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.
<b>Outcome: Our neighbourhoods are well-designed and enable all people to connect</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 24:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 29:</b>	Commence the design of dog off-leash area, playground and picnic facilities, new public toilet, lighting, upgraded access road and car park, connecting paths, passive open space and landscaping at VR Michael Reserve.
<b>Strategic priority 25:</b>	Deliver the staged construction of Whittlesea Park Master Plan in Whittlesea Township providing trees, play spaces, circuit paths, bridges and car parking. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 30:</b>	Continue upgrading pedestrian bridges over the Plenty River and the construction of connecting paths.
<b>Strategic priority 26:</b>	Deliver the staged construction of Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan in Lalor, Lowalde Master Plan in Epping, Nick Ascenzo Reserve in Thomastown, Whittlesea Public Gardens in Lalor and Mernda Recreation Reserve Master Plan in Mernda. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 31:</b>	Commence design of the park improvements at Nick Ascenzo Reserve.



HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

KEY DIRECTION 3

Housing for diverse needs

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our community has the right mix and supply of housing to provide choices for all</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 33:</b>	Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role as well as future projects that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 32:</b>	Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role and identifies associated actions over the short, medium and longer term that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community.
<b>Strategic priority 34:</b>	Deliver the Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, partnering with a community housing organisation to provide affordable homes and a community park. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 33:</b>	Commence construction of Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, providing affordable homes and a community pocket park.
<b>Strategic priority 35:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 34:</b>	Complete the design and commence the construction of the Johnsons Road residential development in Mernda, including affordable housing.

HP Health Plan      DAP Disability Action Plan



# Strong Local Economy



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Increased local employment

#### Actions

**Outcome:** Our municipality attracts investment to provide more local jobs to match population growth

**Strategic priority 38:** 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

**Action 35:** Advocate as part of the planning for the Intermodal Freight Precinct in Beveridge, led by the Federal Government, including for enhanced environmental outcomes, accessible open space, protection of heritage assets, upgrades to the road network and increased employment land supply.

**Outcome:** Our economy is inclusive and accessible for all

**Strategic priority 45:** Deliver a campaign to attract major festivals and events to the region to increase visibility and promote social cohesion. HP DAP

**Action 36:** Develop an industry prospectus to promote local function and event spaces through tourism networks and support PRACC to position itself as a venue of choice for the performing arts and creative industries.

## KEY DIRECTION 3

### Successful, innovative local businesses

#### Actions

**Outcome:** Our economy has a diverse base that fosters small business development

**Strategic priority 37:** 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

**Action 37:** Develop a new Strong Local Economy Strategy, inclusive of a night-time economy plan to respond to current and continued growth in the municipality.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



# Sustainable Environment



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity

Actions	
<b>Outcome:</b> Our landscapes, waters and species are protected, improved and valued	
<b>Strategic priority 16:</b>	Deliver the revitalisation of Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park to improve water quality and habitat for flora and fauna and enhance local area. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 38:</b>	Complete the rehabilitation of Peter Hopper Lake and commence the refilling of the lake.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### Climate ready

Actions	
<b>Outcome:</b> Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat	
<b>Strategic priority 11:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 39:</b>	Deliver the annual tree planting programs for main roads, residential streets, parks, creek corridors and conservation reserves.

## KEY DIRECTION 3

### Leaders in clean, sustainable living

Actions	
<b>Outcome:</b> Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality	
<b>Strategic priority 9:</b>	Deliver and advocate for initiatives that help people and businesses make homes and workplaces more comfortable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 40:</b>	Partner with providers to deliver a pilot household program for energy upgrades.
<b>Strategic priority 10:</b>	Provide additional opportunities to generate local carbon offsets on Council owned and private land to help reduce municipal wide carbon emissions. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 41:</b>	Commence the bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) tree planting program.
<b>Outcome:</b> Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy	
<b>Strategic priority 13:</b>	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. <span>HP</span> <span>DAP</span>
<b>Action 42:</b>	Enhance the hard waste collection service including the trial of a home collection service for whitegoods, e-waste, clothing and small household items.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



# High Performing Organisation



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Driving better community outcomes

Actions	
Outcome: Our community finds it easy to interact with Council	
<b>Strategic priority 52:</b>	Deliver innovative and technology-driven solutions to continually enhance customer experience and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Council's operations. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 43:</b>	Increase our digital offering to enable self-service and make it easier for our community to interact with us online.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### More informed council decisions

Actions	
Outcome: Our communities engage with us on issues and activities that affect them	
<b>Strategic priority 53:</b>	Facilitate the reduction, removal and prevention of barriers for marginalised and at risk groups to contribute to Council decisions. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 44:</b>	Establish a Disability Advisory Committee to facilitate communication and consultation between people with disabilities and Council on matters that affect their lives.

## KEY DIRECTION 3

### More cost-effective investment and engaged workforce

Actions	
Outcome: Our community is confident that City of Whittlesea can fund community needs in the future	
<b>Strategic priority 54:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">DAP</span>
<b>Action 45:</b>	Commence the review of Council Fees and Charges, in accordance with Council's Pricing policy to ensure Council services are financially sustainable.
<b>Action 46:</b>	Begin a review of Council services that considers financial sustainability and alignment with Council priorities.

HP Health Plan    DAP Disability Action Plan



### Linkages to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan

Please refer to appendix 4 of the Community Plan for more information.

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan						Disability Action Plan			
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
SP1	Deliver and facilitate expansion of programs and services that keep older residents independent, connected and supported close to home.			✓		✓					
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.			✓		✓					
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.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
SP4	Deliver and facilitate culturally safe services and programs for First Peoples children and their families, suited to local needs.			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.							✓		✓	
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.	✓				✓		✓		✓	
SP9	Deliver and advocate for initiatives that help people and businesses make homes and workplaces more comfortable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
SP10	Provide additional opportunities to generate local carbon offsets on Council owned and private land to help reduce municipal wide carbon emissions.	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
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.	✓		✓		✓				✓	
SP12	Deliver new stormwater harvesting at Council-owned sports fields and facilities to reduce potable water reliance, enhance water conservation and generate savings.	✓		✓		✓		✓			
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.	✓		✓				✓		✓	
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.	✓									
SP15	Deliver increased reuse and repurposing of materials in Council's asset maintenance and renewal programs.	✓									
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.	✓				✓				✓	
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.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan					Disability Action Plan				
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
SP20	Deliver the new Wollert Sports Reserve consisting of playing fields with lighting, multi-purpose sporting spaces, playground, car parking and a community pavilion.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
SP25	Deliver the staged construction of Whittlesea Park Master Plan in Whittlesea Township providing trees, play spaces, circuit paths, bridges and car parking.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
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.		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
SP28	Deliver the Suburb Place Frameworks to enhance the municipality's distinct character, improve safety, enhance public spaces and upgrade infrastructure.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
SP31	Deliver revitalised and upgraded neighbourhood streetscapes and shopping precincts to enhance accessibility and local character and support local spending.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
SP32	Deliver a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls achieve high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
SP33	Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role and proposes future projects that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP34	Deliver the Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, partnering with a community housing organisation to provide affordable homes and a community park.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP36	Deliver feasibility assessments for key future infrastructure for our growing community.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan					Disability Action Plan				
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
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.								✓		
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP40	Facilitate increased awareness and advocate about the risks of gambling harm in the City of Whittlesea.		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
SP41	Advocate and facilitate the expansion of local services to support individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk.		✓				✓	✓		✓	
SP42	Facilitate local services to improve access to fresh, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food; respond to food insecurity and promote healthy eating.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
SP43	Advocate for and facilitate improved access to mental health services and partner to raise awareness and deliver preventative programs.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
SP44	Support service providers to expand initiatives that promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in community life, employment and education.							✓	✓	✓	✓
SP45	Deliver a campaign to attract major festivals and events to the region to increase visibility and promote social cohesion.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
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.			✓						✓	
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
SP48	Deliver accessible precincts for people living with a significant disability and their careers, including enhanced facilities, sensory spaces and greater flexibility in utilising community facilities.							✓		✓	✓
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> .	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
SP52	Deliver innovative and technology-driven solutions to continually enhance customer experience and improve the effectiveness, transparency and efficiency of Council's operations.			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
SP53	Facilitate the reduction, removal and prevention of barriers for marginalised and at risk groups to contribute to Council decisions.			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
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.							✓	✓	✓	
SP55	Deliver the long-term financial sustainability of Council through the optimisation of resources, infrastructure and asset management.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Community Action Plan





**COUNCIL OFFICES**

Civic Centre  
25 Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 8.30am–5pm

**Whittlesea Services Hub**

63 Church Street,  
Whittlesea VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 9.30am–5pm

**Telephone** 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

**Postal address**

Locked Bag 1, Bundoora MDC, VIC 3083

 [info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

 [whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

 [facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea](https://facebook.com/cityofwhittlesea)

 [CityWhittlesea](https://www.instagram.com/CityWhittlesea)

September 2025

 Printed on 100% recycled paper

# City of Whittlesea

## DRAFT COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2026 – 2027



City of Whittlesea

Whittlesea  
**2040**

*A place for all*



Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017

## Acknowledgement

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

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. This Country offered more than just sustenance; it provided fresh water, food, shelter and a thriving environment rich with fish and birdlife.

For countless generations, Country offered places of living and 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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# About this plan

The Community Action Plan 2026-27 (CAP) sets out the actions Council will focus on delivering in the second year of the Community Plan 2025-29. The Community Action Plan 2026-27 is the second annual supplement to the Community Plan 2025-29. It articulates the community and internal facing outcomes that set our strategic direction and these actions are prioritised for delivery in the financial year 2026-27. The Action Plan plays a pivotal role in working towards the vision and strategic direction embedded in Whittlesea 2040 and the Community Plan 2025-29. Progress on this Community Action Plan will be reported on and shared with the community.



# Council's role



**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.



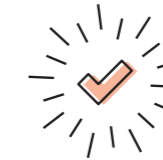
**Regulator/statutory authority/monitor:**

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.

# Connected Community



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### A socially cohesive community

Actions	
<b>Outcome: All members of our community feel that they belong, are valued and respected</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 1:</b>	Deliver and facilitate expansion of programs and services that keep older residents independent, connected and supported close to home. <span style="float: right;">HP</span>
<b>Action 1:</b>	Identify opportunities to enhance client feedback to support the continuous improvement of Council's Ageing Well services.
<b>Strategic priority 17:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 2:</b>	Complete the Fair Access Club Development Program and commence a program to enhance sports facilities to support inclusive access.
<b>Strategic priority 44:</b>	Support service providers to expand initiatives that promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in community life, employment and education. <span style="float: right;">DAP</span>
<b>Action 3:</b>	Partner with service providers, local employers and community organisations to strengthen and expand the Employment Readiness Program, increasing pathways to work and volunteering for young people with disability.
<b>Outcome: Our community strengthens connections between diverse cultures</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 4:</b>	Deliver and facilitate culturally safe services and programs for First Peoples children and their families, suited to local needs. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 4:</b>	Support Family and Children service providers through Council's Best Start Program to further develop initiatives and strategies that improve access and participation for First Peoples.
<b>Outcome: Our community shares stories and learns from one another</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 46:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 5:</b>	Conduct initial planning to enable a long-term plan to rejuvenate the operations, services and creative offering at the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre which will transform it into a thriving creative hub.
<b>Outcome: Our community values and respects First Peoples and celebrates their rich, diverse cultures</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 39:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 6:</b>	Partner with First Peoples organisations to support local programs that encourage social connection and self-determination.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### A healthy and safe community

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our community is healthy, well and physically active</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 19:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 7:</b>	Continue construction of Stage 2 of the Regional Sports Precinct including the indoor stadium and outdoor netball courts.
<b>Strategic priority 20:</b>	Deliver the new Wollert Sports Reserve consisting of playing fields with lighting, multi-purpose sporting spaces, playground, car parking and a community pavilion. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 8:</b>	Complete detailed design of a new sports reserve in Wollert (Alkira Recreation Reserve).
<b>Strategic priority 21:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 9:</b>	Complete construction of the Huskisson Recreation Reserve sports facilities redevelopment.
<b>Strategic priority 22:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 10:</b>	Commence construction of a sports oval and car park at Edgars Creek Recreation Reserve in Wollert.
<b>Strategic priority 23:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 11:</b>	Complete detailed design of Ashley Park Recreation Reserve in Doreen.
<b>Strategic priority 42:</b>	Facilitate local services to improve access to fresh, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food; respond to food insecurity and promote healthy eating. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 12:</b>	Partner and promote good practice in the delivery of healthy and affordable food systems for local communities.
<b>Outcome: Our community can live independently and safely</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 2:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">HP</span>
<b>Action 13:</b>	Develop and deliver a strategic transition plan to align Council's Ageing Well services with the Commonwealth Home Support Program.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

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DRAFT Community Action Plan

KEY DIRECTION 2

A healthy and safe community

Actions

Outcome: Our children and young people are supported to thrive

**Strategic priority 3:** 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

**Action 14:** Complete the construction of the Stables Kindergarten redevelopment and expansion.

**Action 15:** Develop a Kindergarten plan that outlines Council’s actions in the rollout of the Victorian Government Kindergarten Reform.

**Strategic priority 5:** 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

**Action 16:** Advocate for funding to develop more youth-friendly spaces for young people that provide access to services, programs and support.

**Strategic priority 50:** 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

**Action 17:** Complete the construction of the West Wollert Community Centre and commence operations of the new community facility including a library.

Outcome: Our community experiences financial wellbeing

**Strategic priority 40:** Facilitate increased awareness and advocate about the risks of gambling harm in the City of Whittlesea. HP DAP

**Action 18:** Support City of Whittlesea staff to understand the impacts of gambling harm as well as the supports available to the local community.

**Strategic priority 41:** Advocate and facilitate the expansion of local services to support individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk. HP DAP

**Action 19:** Explore ways to improve how those experiencing homelessness are connected to appropriate specialists services.

Outcome: Our community feels safe and supported

**Strategic priority 43:** Advocate for and facilitate improved access to mental health services and partner to raise awareness and deliver preventative programs. HP DAP

**Action 20:** Improve access to Council facilities and spaces to further support community organisations to deliver preventative mental health services and programs.

Outcome: Our community experiences healthy, equal and respectful relationships, and live free from abuse and family violence

**Strategic priority 30:** 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

**Action 21:** Partner with leaders from diverse backgrounds to increase awareness on LGBTIQ+ violence.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



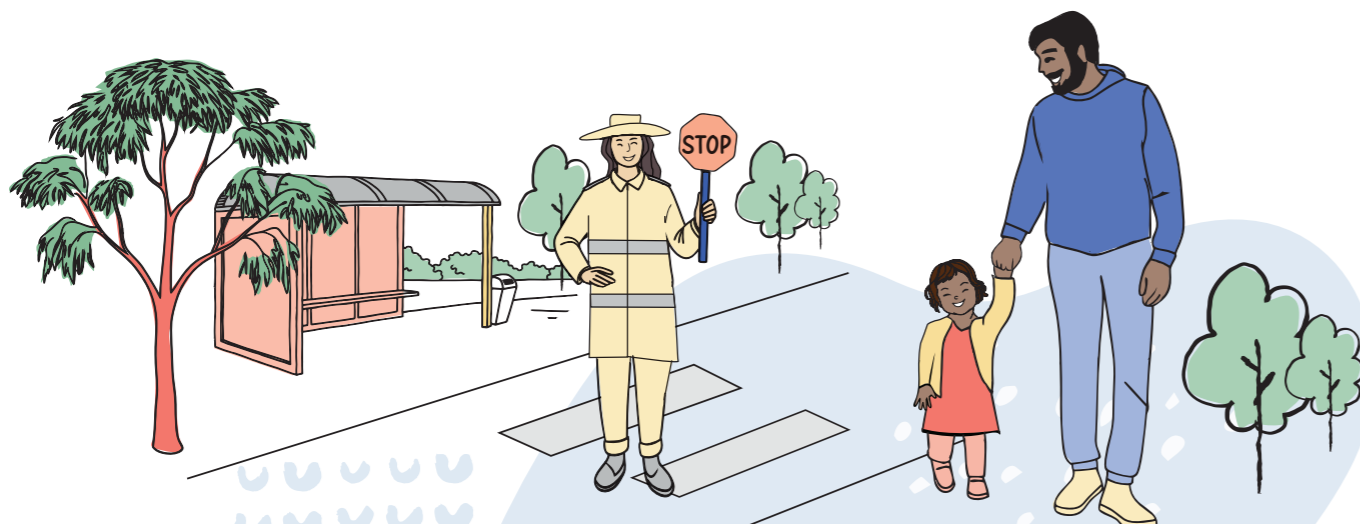
# Liveable Neighbourhoods



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Smart, connected transport network

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our community has options to easily travel where they need to go</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 6:</b> 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.	HP DAP
<b>Action 22:</b> Complete the delivery of the Yan Yean Pipe Track shared path from Child's Road to Centenary Drive in Mill Park.	
<b>Strategic priority 8:</b> 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.	HP DAP
<b>Action 23:</b> Advocate for public transport investment in Wollert Rail and better bus services, as well as key road upgrades including Donnybrook Rd, Findon Rd, Craigieburn East Rd, Bridge Inn Rd, Epping Rd, Dalton Rd intersection upgrades and the future OMR/E6 Freeway.	
<b>Strategic priority 27:</b> 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
<b>Action 24:</b> Deliver shared path lighting on Edgars Creek trail in Thomastown.	



## KEY DIRECTION 2

### Well designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres

Actions	
<b>Outcome: Our neighbourhoods are attractive and desirable places to live, work and play</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 28:</b> Deliver the Suburb Place Frameworks to enhance the municipality's distinct character, improve safety, enhance public spaces and upgrade infrastructure.	HP DAP
<b>Action 25:</b> Commence the development of the Bundoora Place Framework.	
<b>Strategic priority 31:</b> Deliver revitalised and upgraded neighbourhood streetscapes and shopping precincts to enhance accessibility and local character and support local spending.	HP DAP
<b>Action 26:</b> Commence the design of public space improvements to Mill Park Drive precinct including the Miller Community Centre, Mill Park shops, and Mill Park preschool.	
<b>Action 27:</b> Continue construction of The Boulevard shopping precinct upgrade in Thomastown.	
<b>Strategic priority 32:</b> Deliver a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls achieve high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.	HP DAP
<b>Action 28:</b> Complete a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and commence implementation to support high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.	
<b>Outcome: Our community has infrastructure that can adapt to their changing needs</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 7:</b> 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
<b>Action 29:</b> Commence background research for a parking management plan, which will provide a framework to enable a balanced approach to meeting the parking needs of our growing community.	
<b>Strategic priority 36:</b> Deliver feasibility assessments for key future infrastructure for our growing community.	HP DAP
<b>Action 30:</b> Continue to plan for the Darebin Creek Community Centre in Donnybrook, including the preparation of design plans.	
<b>Outcome: Our neighbourhoods are well-designed and enable all people to connect</b>	
<b>Strategic priority 25:</b> Deliver the staged construction of Whittlesea Park Master Plan in Whittlesea Township providing trees, play spaces, circuit paths, bridges. and car parking.	HP DAP
<b>Action 31:</b> Commence the construction of Laurel Street in Whittlesea including stormwater drainage, car parking and improvements to pedestrian safety.	
<b>Strategic priority 26:</b> 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
<b>Action 32:</b> Commence construction of Nick Ascenzo Reserve including upgrading the reserve with a new play space, upgraded picnic/barbecue areas, outdoor gathering spaces, forecourt plaza, public toilets, exercise and fitness equipment, multi-purpose hard court and car park.	

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

KEY DIRECTION 3

Housing for diverse needs

Actions

Outcome: Our community has the right mix and supply of housing to provide choices for all

**Strategic priority 33:** Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council’s role and proposes future projects that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community. HP DAP

**Action 33:** Complete design of the Downs Road residential development in Lalor, comprising at least 25 homes, including affordable housing.

**Strategic priority 34:** 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

**Action 34:** Complete construction of Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, partnering with a community housing organisation to provide 27 affordable homes.

**Strategic priority 35:** 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

**Action 35:** Continue construction of the Johnsons Road residential development in Mernda, comprising 37 homes, including affordable housing and open spaces.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



# Strong Local Economy



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Increased local employment

#### Actions

**Outcome:** Our municipality attracts investment to provide more local jobs to match population growth

**Strategic priority 38:** 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

**Action 36:** Advocate for community benefits including for enhanced environmental outcomes, improvements to the road network and diverse employment opportunities as part of the planning process for the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct.

**Outcome:** Our economy is inclusive and accessible for all

**Strategic priority 45:** Deliver a campaign to attract major festivals and events to the region to increase visibility and promote social cohesion. HP DAP

**Action 37:** Promote the City of Whittlesea as a key destination for major and local events and festivals.

**Strategic priority 47:** 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

**Action 38:** Increase community use across all life stages of the recently opened murnong Community Centre.

## KEY DIRECTION 2

### Successful, innovative local businesses

#### Actions

**Outcome:** Our economy has a diverse base that fosters small business development

**Strategic priority 37:** 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

**Action 39:** Implement Business Friendly Council initiatives making it more efficient to do business in the City of Whittlesea.

**Action 40:** Launch the Economic Growth Strategy and implement its first-year actions.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan



# Sustainable Environment



## KEY DIRECTION 1

### Climate ready

#### Actions

**Outcome: Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat**

- Strategic priority 11:** 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
- Action 41:** Deliver the annual tree planting programs for main roads, residential streets, parks, creek corridors and conservation reserves.



## KEY DIRECTION 2

### Leaders in clean, sustainable living

#### Actions

**Outcome: Our water resources are managed in an integrated way**

- Strategic priority 12:** Deliver new stormwater harvesting at Council-owned sports fields and facilities to reduce potable water reliance, enhance water conservation and generate savings. HP DAP
- Action 42:** Commence delivery of the AF Walker Recreation Reserve stormwater harvesting scheme in Whittlesea.

**Outcome: Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality**

- Strategic priority 9:** Deliver and advocate for initiatives that help people and businesses make homes and workplaces more comfortable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly. HP DAP
- Action 43:** Launch an ongoing household energy efficiency program to support vulnerable residents.
- Action 44:** Ensure that Council-led housing development projects deliver environmentally sustainable dwellings and neighbourhoods.
- Action 45:** Investigate initiatives and programs that support businesses to reduce emissions across the municipality.

**Strategic priority 10:** Provide additional opportunities to generate local carbon offsets on Council-owned and private land to help reduce municipal-wide carbon emissions. HP DAP

- Action 46:** Deliver a feasibility study to develop local carbon drawdown opportunities with partners including the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action.

**Outcome: Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy**

- Strategic priority 13:** 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
- Action 47:** Complete the "BehaviourWorks illegal dumping research" and review and implement the findings to reduce illegal dumping across the municipality.
- Strategic priority 14:** 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
- Action 48:** Trial an expansion of kerbside recycling services to businesses at full cost recovery.
- Strategic priority 15:** Deliver increased reuse and repurposing of materials in Council's asset maintenance and renewal programs. HP
- Action 49:** Increase the use of recycled materials in council and developer delivered infrastructure projects.

HP Health Plan DAP Disability Action Plan

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# High Performing Organisation



**KEY DIRECTION 1**

## Driving better community outcomes

Actions	
Outcome: Our community finds it easy to interact with Council	
<b>Strategic priority 52:</b>	Deliver innovative and technology-driven solutions to continually enhance customer experience and improve the effectiveness, transparency and efficiency of Council's operations. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 50:</b>	Further enhance customer service using technology such as a chatbot on Council's website and a telephone system that supports in-language communication with residents.

**KEY DIRECTION 2**

## More informed council decisions

Actions	
Outcome: Our communities engage with us on issues and activities that affect them	
<b>Strategic priority 53:</b>	Facilitate the reduction, removal and prevention of barriers for marginalised and at risk groups to contribute to Council decisions. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 51:</b>	Partner with community organisations and advocacy groups to enable marginalised and at-risk groups to meaningfully participate in Council decision making processes.

**KEY DIRECTION 3**

## More cost-effective investment and engaged workforce

Actions	
Outcome: Our community is confident that City of Whittlesea can fund community needs in the future	
<b>Strategic priority 54:</b>	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. <span style="float: right;">DAP</span>
<b>Action 52:</b>	Undertake structured reviews of Council services to ensure efficiencies and continuous improvement
<b>Action 53:</b>	Strengthen asset data, risk-based prioritisation and renewal planning, ensuring future investment needs are integrated with long-term financial planning and the capital program.
<b>Strategic priority 55:</b>	Deliver the long-term financial sustainability of Council through the optimisation of resources, infrastructure and asset management. <span style="float: right;">HP DAP</span>
<b>Action 54:</b>	Develop a framework that guides Council to prioritise the investment in new and renewal of Council's community facilities to maximise community benefit.

HP Health Plan    DAP Disability Action Plan



### Linkages to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan

Please refer to appendix 4 of the Community Plan for more information.

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan						Disability Action Plan			
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
SP1	Deliver and facilitate expansion of programs and services that keep older residents independent, connected and supported close to home.			✓		✓					
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.			✓		✓					
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.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
SP4	Deliver and facilitate culturally safe services and programs for First Peoples children and their families, suited to local needs.			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.							✓		✓	
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.	✓				✓		✓		✓	
SP9	Deliver and advocate for initiatives that help people and businesses make homes and workplaces more comfortable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
SP10	Provide additional opportunities to generate local carbon offsets on Council-owned and private land to help reduce municipal-wide carbon emissions.	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	
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.	✓		✓		✓				✓	
SP12	Deliver new stormwater harvesting at Council-owned sports fields and facilities to reduce potable water reliance, enhance water conservation and generate savings.	✓		✓		✓		✓			
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.	✓		✓				✓		✓	
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.	✓									
SP15	Deliver increased reuse and repurposing of materials in Council's asset maintenance and renewal programs.	✓									
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.	✓				✓				✓	
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.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan					Disability Action Plan				
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
SP20	Deliver the new Wollert Sports Reserve consisting of playing fields with lighting, multi-purpose sporting spaces, playground, car parking and a community pavilion.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
SP25	Deliver the staged construction of Whittlesea Park Master Plan in Whittlesea Township providing trees, play spaces, circuit paths, bridges and car parking.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓
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.		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
SP28	Deliver the Suburb Place Frameworks to enhance the municipality's distinct character, improve safety, enhance public spaces and upgrade infrastructure.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
SP31	Deliver revitalised and upgraded neighbourhood streetscapes and shopping precincts to enhance accessibility and local character and support local spending.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
SP32	Deliver a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies and controls achieve high quality design and sustainable development outcomes.	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
SP33	Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role and proposes future projects that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP34	Deliver the Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, partnering with a community housing organisation to provide affordable homes and a community park.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP36	Deliver feasibility assessments for key future infrastructure for our growing community.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

ID	Strategic Priority	Health Plan					Disability Action Plan				
		Climate change	Family violence	Social connection	Healthy eating	Active living	Homelessness	Goods	Employment	Inclusion	Discrimination
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
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.								✓		
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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SP40	Facilitate increased awareness and advocate about the risks of gambling harm in the City of Whittlesea.		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
SP41	Advocate and facilitate the expansion of local services to support individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk.		✓				✓	✓		✓	
SP42	Facilitate local services to improve access to fresh, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food; respond to food insecurity and promote healthy eating.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
SP43	Advocate for and facilitate improved access to mental health services and partner to raise awareness and deliver preventative programs.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
SP44	Support service providers to expand initiatives that promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in community life, employment and education.							✓	✓	✓	✓
SP45	Deliver a campaign to attract major festivals and events to the region to increase visibility and promote social cohesion.		✓	✓				✓		✓	
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.			✓						✓	
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
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.							✓		✓	✓
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> .	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
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.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
SP52	Deliver innovative and technology-driven solutions to continually enhance customer experience and improve the effectiveness, transparency and efficiency of Council's operations.			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
SP53	Facilitate the reduction, removal and prevention of barriers for marginalised and at risk groups to contribute to Council decisions.			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
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.							✓	✓	✓	
SP55	Deliver the long-term financial sustainability of Council through the optimisation of resources, infrastructure and asset management.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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DRAFT Community Action Plan





**COUNCIL OFFICES**

Civic Centre  
25 Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 8.30am-5pm

**Whittlesea Services Hub**

63 Church Street,  
Whittlesea VIC 3752

**Opening hours**

Monday – Friday, 9.30am-5pm

**Telephone** 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

**Postal address**

Locked Bag 1, Bundoora MDC, VIC 3083

 [whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

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March 2026

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### 4.3 Youth Council Terms of Reference Amendments

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Councillor Support Officer

**In Attendance:** Councillor Support Officer

#### Executive Summary

The Youth Council Terms of Reference define the purpose, objective, structure, resourcing and management of the City of Whittlesea Youth Council. The Youth Council Terms of Reference align with Council's Governance Rules.

Updates to the Youth Council Terms of Reference are being proposed to improve both representation and governance. The 2026-2027 term will consist of 14 young people, however, if a Youth Councillor is unable to fulfill their term or their term ends during this period, the membership will revert to a maximum of 13 young people. The proposed changes also strengthen the Council's commitment to inclusion by keeping a broad, not limited to list of priority groups, while adding a clear requirement that at least one First Nations young person is included as a member. These updates aim to ensure the Youth Council remains flexible in its structure and continues to reflect the diverse experiences of young people across the City of Whittlesea.

#### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT the Youth Council:**

- 1. Resolve to approve the amendments and adopt the Terms of Reference at Attachment 1.**
- 2. Note the updated Youth Council Terms of Reference will come into effect immediately and will be circulated to relevant officers, Council staff and Youth Council members.**

## Background / Key Information

The Youth Council Terms of Reference are being updated to ensure they remain inclusive and responsive to the needs of young people in the City of Whittlesea. The proposed updates clarify the structure of the Youth Council for the 2026–2027 term, confirming a membership of 14 young people, with provision to reduce to a maximum of 13 if a Youth Councillor is unable to continue their term or their term ends during this period.

The changes also strengthen the Council's commitment to inclusive representation. This includes maintaining a broad, not limited to list of priority groups to guide recruitment, and introducing a requirement that at least one First Nations young person is included as a member. These updates aim to support a Youth Council that reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of young people across the municipality, while allowing flexibility in its operation.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

This report includes an attached proposed amended Youth Council Terms of Reference.

### Critical Dates

As outlined in Section 16 of the Youth Council Terms of Reference, the Terms of Reference may be reviewed after 24 months in consultation with Youth Council membership. Council will work with Youth Council through codesign process to explore opportunities to evolve the Terms of Reference.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

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

## Attachments

1. Updated Youth Council Terms of Reference [4.3.1 - 12 pages]

City of Whittlesea

# Youth Council

## Terms of Reference



**City of  
Whittlesea**

**Date of Adoption**

**Directorate Responsible**

4 May 2026  
3 February 2025

Office of Council & CEO & Community Wellbeing

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## Terms of Reference

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### 1. Purpose of the Youth Council

The City of Whittlesea Youth Council is a peak advisory and advocacy group whose role is to represent the voice of young people aged 12 – 22 who live, work, study or have strong connections to the City of Whittlesea. The Whittlesea Youth Council provides a formal means for representation and information exchange between Council and young people and provides opportunities for young people to raise local youth issues.

The Whittlesea Youth Council is one of multiple mechanisms for Council to engage and consult with young people and involve them in decision-making processes. It is a crucial stakeholder in achieving, developing, and reviewing the City's Community vision Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All. The Youth Council is also an important avenue for the youth community to connect with and raise issues with Council, and for Council to refer matters to the Youth Council for their feedback.

### 2. Objectives

Act as representatives to:

- a) Provide a platform for young people to raise issues and advocate on priorities that are important to young people in the City of Whittlesea.
- b) Provide advice to Council on specific issues impacting young people in the City of Whittlesea as relevant.
- c) Offer advice and advocate to Council on current issues and emerging trends for young people and implications for the service sector in the municipality.
- d) Enhance the opportunities for participation in the areas of citizenship, leadership, and civic participation for young people.
- e) Provide advice on Council programs and on the development of spaces used by young people.

### 3. Youth Council Membership and Recruitment

The Whittlesea Youth Council membership will consist of:

- a) a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 13 young people aged between 12 to 22 who either live, study, work, access services or have a significant connection to the City of Whittlesea. The 2026-2027 Youth Council term will consist of 14 young people, however, should a Youth Councillor be unable to continue their term or their term ends during this period, the membership will revert to maximum of 13 young people.
- b) Where possible Youth Council members will be drawn from across the City of Whittlesea geographic area.

- c) Young people selected to be members of the Youth Council should represent the diverse and varied needs of the youth community in City of Whittlesea including but not limited to living in rural Whittlesea, LGBTIQ+, gender diverse, **First Nations**, people with a disability, chronic illness and/or mental illness, carers, people experiencing or have experienced financial insecurity and culturally and linguistically diverse young people. At least one First Nations young person must be included as a member of the Youth Council.
- d) Candidates for Youth Council membership will be sought through a publicly advertised expression of interest outlined in Appendix 1.
- e) Youth Council member applications will be assessed by a panel comprising young people and Council representatives and will follow the process outlined in Appendix 1. The Panel will be a majority membership of young people and preferably chaired by a young person.
- f) Members who are 18 years or over at any point during their term of office are required to apply for and hold a valid Working with Children Check – (Volunteer level minimum).
- g) If a young person turns 23 years before the end of their term, the member will be required to vacate their position.


#### 4. Term of Membership

- a) Term of membership is a 24-month term.
- b) In general, applications for membership will be open to young people aged between 12 – 21 years, this will allow young people to complete a 2-year term before turning 23 years.
- c) Council will be advised of the Youth Council membership.
- d) In general, once a term of membership is completed, Youth Council members aged 16 years and over cannot re-apply for membership.
- e) If a young person is aged 12-16 years during their term of membership, they can re-apply for membership following a break of 24 months. This allows for a young person aged 12-16 years during their initial term of membership the opportunity to pursue a Youth Mayor or Deputy Youth Mayor position.

#### 5. Responsibilities of Members

In order to fulfill the requirements of the Youth Council, members are required to:

- a) Bring their own experiences of being a young person in Whittlesea.
- b) Represent local young people.
- c) Keep informed of current issues and emerging themes in relation to young people.
- d) Be aware of the activities, interests and concerns relating to the youth sector and the lives of young people in the municipality.


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- e) Prepare for and participate in regular Youth Council meetings and portfolio group meetings.
  - f) Engage with and seek feedback from other young people in the municipality in relation to the topics discussed at Youth Council meetings.

## 6. Induction, Planning and Training

- a) **Induction and Planning:** Youth Council members will meet for a compulsory induction and planning program prior to the first scheduled Youth Council meeting. The Induction and Planning program will provide members with training on meeting and Council processes. During the induction and planning program, the Youth Council will learn how to hold meetings using Council's Governance Rules.
- b) **Training:** Youth Council members will engage in ongoing training relevant to their role as Youth Council members. Some extraordinary training opportunities may be offered outside of meeting schedule times, these opportunities are voluntary for Youth Council members.

## 7. Management of the Youth Council

- a) **Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor:** The Youth Council will receive nominations for and vote on a Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor from the membership at the second meeting of the term. Elections will be held in accordance with Council's Governance Rules with nominations submitted via an Expression of Interest form prior to the first meeting. Youth Council meetings are chaired by the Youth Mayor with the support of the Office of Council & CEO providing meeting procedure advice in line with Council's Governance Rules. In the event that the Youth Mayor is unable to perform their role, the Deputy Youth Mayor will take over chairing responsibilities. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor are required to be 16 years old or above.
- b) **Meetings:** Meetings will be held monthly from 6:00-7:30pm. A meeting must not be continued for more than one (1) additional 30 minutes by way of a Procedural Motion for a continuance and is carried (with a mover and seconder, and no debate).
- c) **Quorum:** At least 50%+1 members of the total number of Youth Council members need to be present at meetings in order for the meeting to proceed. In the event that a quorum is not achieved within thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled commencement time of the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned until the following month.

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- d) **Standing Agenda Items:** Each Youth Council meeting will have a standing agenda item of:
- Meeting Opening and Introductions
  - Acknowledgement of Country
  - Diversity and Good Governance Statement
  - Apologies
  - Declaration of Conflict of Interest
  - Confirmation of Previous meeting Minutes
  - Reports and matters for consideration.
- e) **Minimum level of attendance:** Members who are absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without notice by 5pm on the day of the meeting will be removed from the Youth Council membership, notice of this will be provided in writing by the Office of the CEO. Prior to removal, Council officers will conduct a check-in with the Youth Council member who has been absent to address any barriers to participation. This will identify next steps including greater support for attendance or leave of absence or removal or resignation.
- f) **Extended leave of absence:** Youth Council members can request to take an extended leave of absence from the Youth Council. Requests for extended absence must be submitted in writing to the Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO. The Office of the CEO will notify the Youth Council of extended leave of absence of members in writing, to be minuted at the next scheduled monthly meeting.
- g) **Resignation from Youth Council:** Youth Council members wishing to resign from their position on the Whittlesea Youth Council must advise the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor in writing and the letter tabled at the next scheduled Youth Council meeting. This letter is to be forwarded to the Executive Manager Office Council & CEO.
- h) **Voting:** Will be by show of hand and each eligible member is entitled to one vote. A motion is deemed to have been carried if it receives 50%+1 votes of the Youth Council members present at the meeting. In situations where there is a tied vote the Youth Mayor has the casting vote.
- i) **Youth Council Support and Resourcing:** The Office of Council & CEO will be responsible for secretarial support including, in consultation with the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor, preparing and circulating meeting agendas, taking minutes of meetings, assisting in the preparation of reports and other administrative functions i.e. payment of honorarium. Governance, Communications and Community Engagement support will be provided by the Executive Services directorate.



The Youth Development Team will be responsible for resourcing, including Council meeting agenda setting, attending events and functions with Youth Council members, assist Youth Council members write meeting reports, liaising with Youth Council members to establish their annual goals, coordinate the expression of interest recruitment process, including appointments, and facilitating the new Youth Councillor member induction program.

- j) **Honorarium Payment:** The commitment made to the Youth Council is considerable with young people making a significant time commitment to ongoing work throughout the year which may impact their ability to undertake other paid employment. In acknowledgement of the significant time commitment involved in Youth Council membership, members will be paid an annual Honorarium fee to compensate for costs associated with their participation. There will be one rate for non-executive Youth Council members and two higher rates for Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor in recognition of the greater commitment required by these two roles. The Honorarium fee will be paid monthly (Pro-rata).

Youth Council Honorarium	
Position	Honorarium (Annually)
Youth Mayor	\$3,000
Deputy Youth Mayor	\$2,000
Non-execute Member	\$1,200

All Youth Councillors are eligible for additional payments to assist in their attendance of Youth Council meetings. These payments can include but are not limited to; travel costs including Taxis or Rideshare (Uber), parking costs when required to attend events, childcare costs if Youth Councillor requires to place their child/children in a care facility in order to attend Youth Council meeting and the associated costs of obtaining a police check.


Additional costs also may be incurred if a Youth Councillor requires access to an interpreter.

- k) Council will publish the Terms of Reference, list of Youth Council members, meeting agendas and the minutes of meetings on Council’s website.

**8. Attendance of Non-Members**

- a) The Youth Council may invite relevant Council Officers, other guests, experts and/or young people to attend meetings in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time. The Office of Council & CEO, in consultation with the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor, set meeting agendas and confirm non-member attendees. The Youth Council members reserve the right to limit non-Youth Council attendees at meetings. All meeting visitors are required to adhere to the Youth Council Charter. Youth Council meetings are not open for public viewing.



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- b) Council Officers and external groups and parties wishing to consult with the Youth Council must submit a request form outlining the purpose of the request a minimum of one month prior to the Youth Council meeting they wish to attend. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor, with the support of Office of Council & CEO, will determine whether the request fits with the priorities and purpose of the Youth Council. The request form is to be publicly available on the Youth Council page of the City of Whittlesea website. The request form will be developed by the Youth Council during the planning and Induction process so that it outlines the Youth Council's priorities for the term.
  - c) The Whittlesea Youth Council is accessible and welcomes the active participation of young people with disabilities. To ensure that active Youth Council membership is accessible, the City of Whittlesea Youth Services staff will support members to develop an individual access and support plan with young people who may require additional support to participate. Youth Council members who require additional support are welcome to bring support people to meetings. Youth Council members are to raise this with the Office of Council & CEO staff during the induction and planning process or prior to the next Youth Council meeting so that the Youth Mayor can be notified of non- members in attendance in a support capacity. Support people are to attend Youth Council meetings in strictly an access and support capacity and are not permitted to engage in meeting business.

#### **9. Relationship with Council**

- a) The Youth Council will report to and meet with Council twice yearly informing Council of identified issues or priorities of the Youth Council, projects and portfolio work undertaken by Youth Council members and enter into dialogue with Council leaders around issues of importance or consequence for young people.
- b) A suitable forum for these twice-yearly meetings will be determined once the Youth Council is established and may include presentations/discussion at Council Briefings.
- c) The mode of report will be chosen by Youth Council members. Reports to Council could incorporate but not limited to; video or infographic reports; verbal Council presentations; written updates (memos, letters or submissions).

#### **10. Providing Advice to Council**

The Youth Council may invite Council Officers to Youth Council meetings for the purpose of gaining information and consulting on relevant Council strategies and policies. The Youth Council may also engage with Council Officers at Youth Council meetings for the purpose of providing expert advice to Council on topics and issues relevant to young people.

**11. Code of Conduct**

Youth Council members will be required to sign an undertaking to adhere to the City of Whittlesea's Code of Conduct at the commencement of each term. The Code of Conduct sets out the behavioural expectations of all staff, contractors and volunteers representing the City of Whittlesea. During the Induction and Planning phase of program, training will be provided to Youth Council members on understanding and following the Code of Conduct.

**12. Youth Council Charter**

We, the members of the City of Whittlesea Youth Council, commit to advocating for and being the voice of the youth within our municipality. We ensure a safe space for all, to engage in constructive collaboration on matters affecting young people. We aim to empower and foster community connectedness in our youth, so they feel valued and supported to achieve their aspirations.

**13. Grievance Resolution Process**

In the event that a conflict occurs between Youth Council members, the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor will work with the Executive Manager, Office of Council & CEO to resolve it. If Youth Council members have a grievance or concern, it should be raised according to the following:

- a) If the grievance is about a fellow Youth Council member, the issue should be raised with the Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor and Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO.
- b) If the grievance is about the Youth Mayor or Deputy Youth Mayor, the issue should be raised with the Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO
- c) If the grievance is with the Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO it should be raised with the CEO.
- d) All conflicts will be addressed and resolved in accordance with the code of conduct and the principles of natural justice.
- e) Youth Development staff support.

**14. Public Statements**

Members of the Youth Council cannot make public statements on behalf of Council as an independent group without prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Public Affairs or their nominee.

**15. Budget**

Without consultation with the Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO or Director Community Wellbeing, the Youth Council is unable to plan or hold events or functions that incurs expenditure to Council.



**16. Review of Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference (ToR) may be reviewed after 24 months in consultation with Youth Council membership. Council will work with Youth Council through a codesign process to explore opportunities to evolve the ToR.



## Appendix 1: Whittlesea Youth Advisory Committee New Membership Recruitment Process Flow Chart

### September – October

#### Public Expression of Interest Process Open

Flyers and information will be distributed to primary and secondary schools, TAFES, universities, community spaces including CAC's and community services that work with or support young people who live, work, study or connected to the City of Whittlesea. A social media campaign will take place, displaying flyers and information on all of Councils social media platforms.

An Information Session will be held, this session will be recorded and uploaded online.

Youth Services staff will provide support to enable young people to apply in a manner that meets their needs.

### October – November

#### Expressions of Interest Received

Applications for membership are open to young people aged between 12 – 21 years, this will allow for young people to complete a 2-year term before turning 23 years.

An Expression of Interest process will be open during October/November. Where necessary, applications will be submitted in a manner that supports young people's needs.

Submissions will be sent to Youth Services Team and will be reviewed and shortlisted by a panel of Council representatives and young people.

### November – December

#### Interviews

Shortlisted applications for membership will be interviewed by a panel comprising of Council representatives and young people. Young people selected to be the members of the committee should, when possible, comprise a diverse mix of young people with respect to age, gender and sexual identity, cultural background, lived experience and location within the municipality.

Successful applicants will undergo a referee check and will be notified of their membership at the end of November/early December.

### January

#### Induction & Planning

Successful applicants will be required to attend the induction and planning program.

Members will meet for a compulsory induction and planning program at the commencement of their term prior to the first scheduled Youth Council meeting. The Induction and planning program will provide members with training on meeting and Council processes and review and orientation to Youth Council Terms of Reference. During the induction and planning program, the Youth Council will determine the focus and scope of three portfolio sub-groups for the term.

### February

#### First Youth Council Meeting

The first meeting for each term will take place in February. Election of leadership roles including Youth Mayor **and**, Deputy Youth Mayor **and Portfolio leaders** will be undertaken at the **Marchfirst** meeting along with the confirmation of a Committee Charter.

**Appendix 2: City of Whittlesea Recruitment for Youth Council Vacant Member Position**

The following document outlines the process for filling vacant positions on the Whittlesea Youth Council in the event a member vacates their position. Where this occurs, Council may:

- a) Refer to the original EOI Applicants shortlist if the vacancy is within the first 12 months of the term (ie. membership will be filled through shortlisted applicants who were interviewed but unsuccessful due to capacity limits during the previous Youth Council application period).
- b) If the vacancy occurs within the last six months of the Term, the vacant position will not be filled unless a Youth Council quorum is unable to be maintained.
- c) The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor along with Council representatives will make up the panel for recruiting new members.
- d) An induction process will occur for newly appointed members filling vacant positions outside of the annual recruitment process.

## 5 Notices of Motion

### 5.1 Deputy Youth Mayor Age Review

**Youth Councillor:** Youth Cr Charlize Pommier

**NoM No:** 2026/01

Youth Cr Charlize Pommier has given notice that it is their intention to move the following Motion at the Scheduled Youth Council Meeting to be held on Monday, 4 May at 6pm.

#### Motion

**THAT the Youth Council request Council Administration to review the eligibility age for Youth Councillors to nominate themselves for the position of Deputy Youth Mayor.**

**Notice Received:** 18 February 2026

**Date of Meeting:** 4 May 2026

#### PREAMBLE

The purpose of this motion is to discuss point seven A in the Youth Council Terms of Reference document in terms of the Youth Councillor Code of Conduct.

For context, this particular point in the Terms of Reference document details the role, and eligibility requirement of Deputy and Youth Mayor. The only additional requirement for the Mayor and Deputy roles is that the councillor is over sixteen years of age.

This may seem reasonable on its own, but when paired with our code of conduct there are multiple reasons it does not fit. It is stated that we are to 'represent local young people, ages 12 - 22'. Now unless I am mistaken, that includes individuals under the age of sixteen, in fact it is just over a third of that age range.

We are also expected to 'treat others fairly and objectively and provide a safe space, free from discrimination, harassment, and criticism'. When I look around this table, I see smart, engaged young people who are here to learn, and speak on behalf of our peers for the betterment of our community. It is crucial that under sixteen-year-olds have equal access to achieving the same great goals.

The final point from our code of conduct that I would like to touch upon is that we are expected to 'recognise the strengths of our diverse community of young people and ensure people from all walks of life, ability and backgrounds feel comfortable to engage and contribute'.

We all have had different life experiences, that is part of what makes us work well alongside each other. Our age is one factor that sets us apart, this is what makes it so critical that we have equal opportunity across different age groups.

My proposal is that under sixteen-year-olds should be able to apply for the role of deputy mayor. This compromise would allow younger youth councillors the opportunity to learn and grow without placing too much pressure on them.

**6 General / Urgent Business**

**7 Closure**