



Strong Local Economy Action Plan 2024–2026

Cover photo: Cooper Street
employment precinct
Photo: Jagsingh Epping



Purpose of this document

The Strong Local Economy Action Plan 2024–2026 (Action Plan) sets out the actions Council will focus on to complete the delivery of the Strong Local Economy Strategy 2022-2026 (Strategy).

It is made up of the key actions from the Community Plan, Agrifood Plan, Circular Economy Plan, Destination Plan, Economic Participation Plan and the Investment Attraction Plan.

The Action Plan summarises what Council will do to build employment, educational opportunities and innovative enterprises of all sizes in the City of Whittlesea, with the ultimate aim to deliver a prosperous and inclusive economy for all.

Actions are set out under each of the three Key Directions, the outcomes they are contributing to, and Council’s role in delivering each action. Outcomes are detailed further in the Strong Local Economy Strategy.

An Action Plan for each year will be developed in line with Council’s Community Plan and annual budget process. Actions listed in this document are subject to consideration in Council’s annual budget process.

Council’s roles

Role	Aim	What Council may do?
Provider	To implement projects, programs and campaigns for use by businesses and community for a prosperous and diverse economy.	Initiate campaigns, incentives and business or educational support programs.
Facilitator	To establish partnerships and collaborate with stakeholders, to create economic participation opportunities.	Partner with key stakeholders and provide contributions (funding, knowledge and expertise, network opportunities) to roll out programs.
Advocate	To support economic and precinct investment through promotion and influencing decision-making, rather than direct involvement.	Educate key stakeholders including higher levels of government to address provision gaps, and influence government and decision making.



Key direction 1

Increased local employment



Actions	Council’s role
Outcome: Our municipality attracts investment to provide more local jobs to match population growth	
Identify opportunities for trail networks, picnic areas and cultural activities in Quarry Hills Regional Parkland.	Provider
Identify opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities to encourage tourism visitation to places of interest.	Provider
Develop an industry prospectus to promote local function and events spaces through tourism networks and support Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention centre (PRACC) to position itself as a venue of choice for performing arts and creative industries.	Provider
Continue to support and collaborate with Melbourne’s North Food Group and key stakeholders through networking and development opportunities.	Facilitator
Continue and evaluate Council’s Business Relocation and Growth Program for business attraction and growth.	Provider
Actively promote the opportunities of the municipality through Investment Attraction marketing and communication initiatives.	Provider
Continue to support major leisure facilities in growth areas, such as the Growling Frog Golf Course, for their value in attracting property investment.	Advocate
Outcome: Our economy is inclusive and accessible for all	
Explore opportunities to attract large festivals and events to the area.	Provider
Develop print and digital itineraries for walking and cycling, linking with public transport and popular sites.	Provider
Support and encourage the establishment of activities and events at the Aboriginal Gathering Place.	Provider
Identify and work with key stakeholders to address skill shortages through targeted inclusive programs/events.	Facilitator
Explore opportunities for university and work experience placements.	Facilitator
Investigate the opportunities to deliver a jobs event to support our priority cohorts.	Facilitator
Continue the inclusive employment program to ensure marginalised community members can gain meaningful employment experience with Council.	Provider
Continue to deliver a Work Ready volunteer program for qualified and newly arrived migrants.	Provider
Outcome: Our community has access to employment support and career advisory services	
Investigate the need for supporting businesses to undertake inclusive recruitment and employment.	Facilitator
Engage with service units when they are preparing specifications for management contracts of Council services to include the requirement to employ local, inclusive, and reflects our community.	Provider



Photo: Whittlesea Tech School

Key direction 2

Education opportunities for all



Actions	Council's role
Outcome: Our community use libraries to learn and develop	
Support the Mernda mini branch, Mernda Town Centre and explore opportunities for collaboration with the Centre's traders.	Facilitator
Continue to support the mobile library service and ongoing review to meet the growth areas needs as they prepare for permanent infrastructure.	Advocate
Continue to support the Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) and other stakeholders to deliver co-working facilities.	Facilitator
Continue to support/partner and collaborate with Yarra Plenty Regional Library and external stakeholders to develop and deliver appropriate programs and training for the community.	Facilitator
Commence construction of Murnong Community Centre and library and deliver additional mobile bus library stop locations to support our growing community.	Provider
Outcome: Our workforce has skills matched to industry needs both now and into the future	
Continue partnership with Hume Whittlesea Local Learning Employment Network in the delivery of the Whittlesea Youth Commitment (with a focus on promoting local pathways to jobs and careers for young people in the City of Whittlesea).	Facilitator
Outcome: Businesses and education providers collaborate to develop locally required skills	
Identify and promote agricultural opportunities for small-scale properties to encourage growth of sustainable agriculture.	Provider
Encourage collaboration between educational institutions, local business, external stakeholders and industry to understand the training needs of the future workforce.	Facilitator
Develop and implement a behaviour change campaign for businesses to learn how to transition to circular principles, with the help of external stakeholders such as education providers.	Provider



Key direction 3

Successful, innovative local businesses



Actions	Council's role
Outcome: Our businesses innovate and thrive by adapting to technology and the circular economy	
Promote Ziebell's Farmhouse as a place for storytelling the history and heritage of the area and support the development of expanded content.	Provider
Support the retailers to promote and sell locally made produce.	Provider
Be involved in developing wayfinding signage for significant tourism sites, roads, trails and paths.	Facilitator
Support the agri-food sector to be future ready through improved connectivity between industry, local education, and research and development.	Facilitator
Seek both Federal and State Government investment to address mobile and broadband blackspots in existing areas in our municipality and provide connectivity for future growth areas.	Advocate
Deliver materials to increase awareness of the circular economy to businesses.	Provider
Advocate for better product labelling of recycled content – to indicate how much of the packaging materials are made from recycled components.	Advocate
Identify and build relationships with businesses in key industries to transition to circular operations.	Provider
Explore opportunities for a soft plastics collection point for businesses.	Facilitator
Connect businesses with opportunities to develop and transform food waste into valuable resources.	Facilitator
Inform businesses about grants and funding opportunities that will help them shift their business models to circularity.	Facilitator
Connect and support local businesses/entrepreneurs to showcase circular economy products/services at industry events, markets, etc.	Advocate
Promote circular businesses by linking with the Buy Recycled or other online platforms.	Provider
Support non-golf opportunities at the Growling Frog Golf Course.	Advocate

Key direction 3

Successful, innovative local businesses



Actions	Council's role
Outcome: Our economy has a diverse base that fosters small business development	
Explore possible locations for RV's, caravan storage and a caravan park.	Facilitator
Support the development of the Australian Food Innovation Centre (AFIC).	Facilitator
Support new and existing agriculture businesses through farm rate process streamlining and assessment of properties.	Provider
Review and explore options that encourage greater use of the green wedge land asset for agriculture.	Provider
Promote small business mentoring and other related services to priority group cohorts.	Facilitator
Identify and scope social enterprise opportunities.	Provider
Supporting new business growth and innovation for new/small food businesses.	Facilitator
Continue to strengthen business to business connections and capacity building through the Business Advisory Panel, Whittlesea Business Network and other networking opportunities.	Provider
Deliver and enhance the Business Awards to recognise and celebrate the achievements of local businesses.	Provider
Review and enhance the Business Engagement Framework to guide our interactions with stakeholders.	Provider
Continue to support new and existing businesses through Business Concierge service.	Provider



Photo: Uni Hill precinct Bundoora

Key direction 3

Successful, innovative local businesses



Actions	Council's role
Outcome: Our community has vibrant and competitive business precincts	
Promote the area as a destination of choice for investment in accommodation services, more trails, parks and infrastructure.	Advocate
Explore opportunities to educate and support local businesses to embrace a safe place for their customers.	Provider
Deliver mapping of agri-food supply chain businesses to encourage businesses to business interactions and promote the agri-food sector.	Provider
Explore opportunities that build and enhance the night-time economy in the City of Whittlesea.	Provider
Deliver industry development programs for priority sectors.	Facilitator
Continue to actively facilitate and advocate for the development and implementation of key activity centres and employment precincts.	Facilitator
Monitoring and evaluation of frameworks and mechanisms outlined in the Investment Attraction plan.	Facilitator
Advocate to State Government to fund the development of Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub (MFIH) as a transformational project establishing the northern region of Melbourne and Victoria as a world-class agri-food industry and innovation precinct.	Advocate
Monitor the take up and supply of industrial land and investigate opportunities to bring forward supply of industrial land as required.	Facilitator
Work with National Intermodal Corporation, the State Government and Mitchell Shire Council to undertake planning for Stage 1b of the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct.	Facilitator

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**City of
Whittlesea**