Council Plan
2017 – 2021 UPDATE 2020

Council Action Plan
2020 – 2021

A place for all

DRAFT
About the City of Whittlesea

The City of Whittlesea is located about 20 kilometres north of Melbourne. It is one of Melbourne’s largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490 square kilometres with 235,000 residents. It is also one of the fastest growing municipalities, welcoming approximately 8,000 new residents every year.

The City of Whittlesea includes the suburbs of Beveridge (part), Bundoora (part), Donnybrook, Doreen (part), Eden Park, Epping, Hume Vale, Kinglake West (part), Lalor, Mernda, Mill Park, South Morang, Thomastown, Whittlesea, Wollert, Woodstock and Yan Yean (part).

The City of Whittlesea provides a range of civic and social services including waste and recycling collection services, building and planning services, maternal and child health services, services and support for the aged, people with a disability and migrants.

Council is also responsible for community infrastructure such as community centres, bike paths, upgrades to sporting facilities, local roads and playgrounds and parks.

Council works with all levels of government including other local councils, developers, local organisations and community groups to advocate, plan and provide for our community’s needs.

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of this place.

About the Plan

This 2020-21 Council Action Plan articulates the key initiatives the City of Whittlesea will deliver in the coming 12 months towards achieving our community vision of A place for all.

The City of Whittlesea, like local government areas across Australia and our counterparts overseas, continues to respond to the unprecedented challenge presented by the coronavirus pandemic. The situation is constantly evolving and we are closely monitoring the impact of the pandemic on individuals, businesses, families, community groups, sporting clubs and organisations.

We won’t have a comprehensive understanding of the full impact of the pandemic for many months. The City of Whittlesea remains committed to:

• continuing to provide critical services throughout the emergency
• adjusting delivery priorities to meet evolving community needs
• supporting our community recovery in the months and years ahead.

The challenge is significant and we are grateful to be working in partnership with a wide network of local agencies who share our commitment to the wellbeing of this community.

Delivery priorities beyond the pandemic include the re-opening of the $25 million state-of-the-art Mill Park Leisure and extending Findon Road to Plenty Road to open up a key east-west link that will increase road capacity and reduce traffic congestion.

We are working towards building socially and culturally inclusive communities including the development of a new Disability Action Plan. We will be delivering early activation in our emerging communities and we will advocate for better public transport, state roads, affordable, accessible and appropriate housing.

Our planning frameworks and tools will ensure we are protecting and enhancing our unique ecological environment through a Green Wedge Management Plan, Climate Change Action Plan and a Greening Whittlesea Strategy.

Working together we will navigate the unprecedented challenges ahead and deliver the important initiatives outlined in this Plan as we strive to achieve our community vision of A place for all.
Key achievements
2017-2020

We redeveloped and upgraded parks, gardens and recreation reserves including an all abilities play space, sports grounds, soccer pitches and pavilions.

In partnership with the community, a new vision was developed. **Whittlesea 2040; A place for all.**

Council prevented the installation of further electronic gaming machines in South Morang in a landmark legal case that will contribute to addressing the harmful impacts of gambling more broadly across the municipality.

We are on track to deliver more than $170 million in infrastructure and refurbished major facilities including Mill Park Leisure, Whittlesea Swim Centre and the Civic Centre redevelopment.

We redeveloped and upgraded parks, gardens and recreation reserves including an all abilities play space, sports grounds, soccer pitches and pavilions.

Council successfully trialled a food and garden organics disposal service. From July 2020, residents across the City of Whittlesea will be able to dispose of their food and garden organics through Council’s green waste kerbside service.

Council successfully advocated for key local infrastructure including two new primary schools, the O’Herns Road/Hume Freeway interchange, Plenty Road duplication, Mernda Road extension and Mernda Town Centre.

Our innovative new approach to procurement will save $28 million over ten years, grow local jobs and encourage social inclusion.

We led an innovative collaboration with neighbouring councils to deliver the new Animal Welfare Facility in Epping.

Council successfully advocated for key local infrastructure including two new primary schools, the O’Herns Road/Hume Freeway interchange, Plenty Road duplication, Mernda Rail extension and Mernda Town Centre.
1.1 We want a **socially cohesive community** where:
- our community is friendly and welcoming
- there is a sense of community and belonging
- we embrace and celebrate diversity
- there are opportunities to connect and build social networks.

Our city opens its arms to every resident and is a place where all walks of life are celebrated and supported.

Council provides these services:
- community facilities
- Aboriginal reconciliation
- arts, heritage and events
- leisure and recreation
- ageing well
- animal management
- public health and safety
- youth services
- family and children’s services
- community strengthening
- customer service, communications and civic participation.

Council measures progress on:
- social cohesion
- physical activity
- safety in public areas
- civic participation.

1.2 We want a **healthy and safe community** where our community:
- is healthy and well
- is physically active
- has access to health and support services
- is safe at home and in public.

1.3 We want a **participating community** where:
- our community is well-informed
- decisions are made locally
- there is volunteering and leadership
- we have vibrant community groups.

Our city is the smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry investment.

3.1 We want **increased local employment** where:
- residents are employed locally
- there are a variety of jobs to meet local needs
- there is job seeker and employment support.

3.2 We want **education opportunities for all** including:
- local access to quality education and lifelong learning
- flexible training and skills for jobs
- our community being engaged in learning.

3.3 We want **successful, innovative local businesses** which:
- invest and grow
- produce locally and create new enterprises and start-ups
- have access and provide a variety of local services, trades and commercial centres.

Council provides these services:
- investment attraction
- libraries
- local business support.

Council measures progress on:
- local jobs
- access to education
- gross regional product.
Our city is well-planned and beautiful and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

2.1 We want a smart, connected transport network where:
- road networks flow
- our public transport is well connected
- we have paths and trails for walking and cycling.

2.2 We want well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres where we have:
- attractive streetscapes and public spaces
- easy access to local shops and major commercial centres
- access to quality local facilities, parks and amenity.

2.3 We want housing for diverse needs including:
- quality and varied housing options
- housing that is affordable and accessible.

Our city’s superb landscapes and natural environment are an enduring source of pride.

4.1 We want valued natural landscapes and biodiversity where the community:
- protect and improve local biodiversity
- has sustainable land management
- has an appreciation of local natural environment.

4.2 We want to be climate ready, with more:
- trees for cooling and shelter
- infrastructure built to withstand the changing climate
- community resilience.

4.3 We want to be leaders in clean, sustainable living who:
- reduce waste and increase recycling
- reduce energy use and carbon emissions
- have renewable energy and use water efficiently.
1.1 A socially cohesive community

- Aboriginal truth and reconciliation project
  Working alongside and being led by our local Aboriginal community to capture, consolidate and share their diverse stories, histories and cultures

- Welcoming cities
  Working towards socially and culturally inclusive communities

- McLeans Road Kindergarten
  Redeveloping the facility to accommodate a further kindergarten room

- Early activation - Donnybrook
  Partnering with the developer to ensure initial infrastructure and services are provided timely to the growing local community

1.2 A healthy and safe community

- COVID-19 Pandemic Relief and Recovery Plan
  Supporting our community and local businesses

- Mill Park Leisure relaunch
  Maximising opportunities for residents to utilise the fully redeveloped facility

- Mernda Sports Hub
  Developing a site masterplan and finalising the business case for the Hub

- Connected communities in parks
  Increasing the informal use of parks and perceptions of safety by changing the way Council approaches upgrades, activities and events in parks and reserves

- Community resilience and emergency management
  Ensuring communities are safer, better prepared and more resilient when experiencing emergencies

1.3 A participating community

- Municipal law review
  Closing legal gaps so issues around parking, littering and animal management can be resolved

- Disability Action Plan
  Developing the new Plan for 2021-25 to improve outcomes for people with a disability and their carers

- Multicultural civic participation and leadership project
  Building leadership and participation among multicultural communities through targeted programs and seminars

- Develop Council Plan 2021-25
  Developing the medium-term plan towards achieving Whittlesea 2040 A place for all

3.1 Increased local employment

- Refreshing Epping Central
  Developing a Structure Plan to enable Epping Central Activity Centre to realise its vision and full potential for the community

- Empowering small business
  Piloting easier permit approvals for Whittlesea’s diverse small businesses

3.2 Education opportunities for all

- 3-year-old kindergarten
  Designing the State-funded 3-year-old kindergarten service together with the early childhood sector to support young families in Whittlesea

3.3 Successful, innovative local businesses

- Town Centres Improvement Program
  Continue upgrading Thomastown and Lalor through appealing streetscapes, consistent urban design and transformation at Rochdale Square shopping centre
2.1 Smart, connected transport network
• Advocate for better public transport
  Influencing other levels of government to deliver favourable community outcomes regarding the Wollert rail corridor, the route 86 tram extension and bus services in the growth corridor
• Findon Road extension
  Improving traffic flow in South Morang along Findon Road, Williamsons Road and Danaher Drive to Plenty Road
• Cycling and walking
  Continuing to improve the local shared path network and advocate for further external funding
• Advocate for better state roads
  Influencing other levels of government to deliver favourable community outcomes regarding arterial roads and the Epping-Wollert-Donnybrook transport corridor
• Epping Donnybrook transport study
  Investigating the economic and social impacts of key transport infrastructure such as the E6 and Wollert rail
• Streets for people
  Engaging with residents and businesses to upgrade the streetscape and public spaces in the designated priority area

2.2 Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres
• Mernda town centre
  Developing the business case and feasibility study for the Mernda town centre precinct including services hub and partnership opportunities
• Aboriginal heritage study
  Partnering with the Aboriginal community to improve protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values (phase 1)

2.3 Housing for diverse needs
• Housing for diverse needs
  Advocating for affordable, accessible and appropriate housing in partnership with Hume City and Mitchell Shire Councils

4.1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity
• Biodiversity asset mapping
  Updating our data on local flora and fauna to enable strong biodiversity decisions in a changing ecological environment
• Green Wedge Management Plan
  Developing the roadmap for managing our green wedge over the next decade

4.2 Climate ready
• Climate Change Action Plan
  Planning with residents, businesses and industry to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
• Greening Whittlesea Strategy
  Planting more trees for a cooler city ready to deal with higher average temperatures

4.3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living
• Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy
  Setting Whittlesea’s waste and resource recovery goals for the next decade to reduce waste and increase
Delivering value to the City of Whittlesea community*

High-performing organisation
Council delivers a range of internal functions and activities enabling the delivery of efficient and effective services and initiatives. Council’s goal is to be a high-performing organisation which delivers best value to the community. There are four main internal services:
- our governance
- our people
- our finance and assets
- our systems and knowledge.

The Strategic Resource Plan
The Strategic Resource Plan is prepared and updated every year in conjunction with the Council Plan to reflect the financial and non-financial resources required to achieve the key directions and actions included in the Council Plan.

The Strategic Resource Plan is available at Council’s offices or on Council’s website whittlesea.vic.gov.au

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