

City of Whittlesea
**Community Plan
Action Plan**
2023 – 2024

A place for all





Connected community

About this Plan

The Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 is the year 3 annual supplement to the Community Plan 2021-2025.

It articulates the key actions prioritised for delivery in the financial year 2023-2024, including actions for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Disability Action Plan.

The Action Plan plays a pivotal role in working towards the vision and strategic direction embedded in Whittlesea 2040 and the Community Plan 2021-2025.

Acknowledgement of Country

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.

Our community is compassionate and welcoming. We are healthy and can easily access the support services we need. People of all backgrounds, ages and abilities feel that they are an essential part of the community. We work together, making our community a better place for all.

Services

 Animal management	 Ageing well	 Arts, heritage and events	 Aboriginal reconciliation
 Community facilities	 Customer service, communications and civic participation	 Children and family services	 Community strengthening
 Youth services	 Public health and safety	 Leisure and recreation	

Our achievements during 2021-2023

- ✓ Our 186 mobile vaccination pop-ups saw 4,895 vaccinations administered across the municipality
- ✓ Council endorsed the development of the Aboriginal Gathering Place on 18 July 2022
- ✓ We took over management of the animal management facility in Epping and renamed it to wat djerring
- ✓ Headspace commenced service delivery from Council's Edge Youth Services Hub at Plenty Valley South Morang to support younger residents
- ✓ Aged care service reform analysis supports residents to transition to the national Aged Care and disability systems
- ✓ National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) market analysis identifies local service gaps
- ✓ Increased grants to support community groups and events
- ✓ We received a \$20 million State Government funding commitment for the Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre in Mernda
- ✓ We are promoting accessibility features and supports available at Meadowglen International Athletics Stadium, Mill Park All Abilities play space and Mill Park Leisure Centre and help people familiarise themselves with these physical and social spaces via our Social Stories before visiting
- ✓ Reviewed local sports club activities for opportunities to involve people with disability
- ✓ Completed person-centred emergency preparedness training as part of the Resilient Communities Project
- ✓ Established the Whittlesea Disability Network Online Hub
- ✓ Delivered the Modelling Respect for Equality Program in partnership with The Men's Project at Jesuit Social Services, which saw 14 leaders in the community build their capacity around addressing gender stereotypes and their harmful impacts
- ✓ Delivered Unpacking the Man Box workshops reaching 81 diverse community members, and established a Community of Practice for local workers in partnership with Women's Health In the North leading prevention initiatives

Key actions for 2023-2024

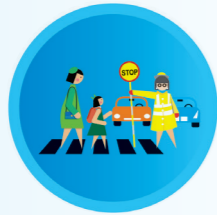
- Consult and develop the community local law to make our municipality safer
- Engage with culturally and linguistically diverse community groups to improve access to Prevention of Violence Against Women programs, services, and resources
- Implement new cat management initiatives, including the cat confinement local law
- Increase community emergency resilience and preparedness, including for people most at risk or at risk communities, to address emergency incidents such as fire, storm, flood, and pandemic
- Deliver the Emergency Services Exhibition in partnership with service organisations to increase community awareness, build relationships and educate around emergencies
- Finalise the Connected Community Strategy to guide how we create a socially cohesive, healthy, safe, and engaged community
- Increase partnerships with community groups and event providers so more people attend our vibrant events
- Complete design and commence construction of an Aboriginal Gathering Place to foster connections to culture, heritage, land, and healing
- Continue to deliver the Community Leadership Program to support residents' leadership skills across community and civic projects
- Provide advice and support Neami National and other partners to establish the Mental Health Local Service for Adults and Older Adults
- Increase support to senior citizen groups via an expanded grants program
- Commence design and site preparations of the regional aquatics and sports centre in Mernda
- Increase provision of netball facilities to support increased female participation in sport and recreation
- Design the tennis facility at Huskisson Reserve
- Develop a Fair Access Policy Implementation Plan to increase participation, equality and inclusion in local sports and recreation, specifically among women and girls
- Create vibrant and welcoming community spaces with activities and programs responding to local community needs
- Commence constructing the Community Activity Centre in Patterson Drive, Donnybrook
- Establish a City of Whittlesea Youth Council
- Adopt the Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2027



Liveable neighbourhoods

Everything we need is close by. We have a variety of quality housing that suits our life stages and circumstances. Every resident can get where they need to go with ease and can leave the car at home.

Services



Traffic management



Roads, public transport and footpaths



Planning and building



Parks and open spaces

Our achievements during 2021-2023

- ✓ Delivered \$8.2 million streetscape projects including the installation of safe walkways, improved road access, open social spaces with sitting and new public toilets
- ✓ Upgraded public amenities for Mernda Adventure Park and the Whittlesea Courthouse
- ✓ Upgraded pram crossings along Barry Road, Thomastown, and bus stops on Whittlesea Yea Road and The Boulevard, Thomastown to be compliant with disability requirements
- ✓ Provided disability permit parking for Ziebell's Farmhouse, Thomastown East Football Reserve and Tennis Club, and Spring Street Hall, Thomastown
- ✓ Adopted of the Asset Plan and Asset Management Plans to help strategically manage Council's portfolio of assets for the next 10 years
- ✓ Upgraded Arthurs Creek Road in Yan Yean, between Plenty Road and Recreation Road, providing motorists with a safer smoother drive.

Key actions for 2023-2024

- Finalise the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy to drive Council's program of work to deliver desirable transport, planning, urban design, open space, and housing outcomes
- Commence design to improve access to the Whittlesea Township Park to better connect our community
- Continue to upgrade Whittlesea Public Gardens
- Continue to upgrade public toilets in line with the Public Toilet Amenity Plan
- Continue the construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park
- Deliver the local road resurfacing works
- Deliver the local road reconstruction works
- Improve disability access to public transport
- Commence streetscape improvements at Gorge Road shopping precinct in South Morang
- Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing in the municipality to address the significant shortfall for local residents



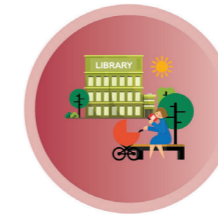
Strong local economy

People of all ages have opportunities to learn and develop skills locally. There are many opportunities to gain employment and build careers not too far from home. Residents support local business, and we are renowned for our successful local economy.

Services



Local business support



Libraries



Investment attraction

Our achievements during 2021-2023

- ✓ \$450,000 provided in business support grants to support recovery from the pandemic
- ✓ Business Advisory Panel implemented
- ✓ We ran the "It's all here" campaign to increase local spend and supporting local businesses
- ✓ Strong Local Economy Strategy and Action Plan endorsed and implemented
- ✓ Strengthened our relationship with the business community and enhanced business-to-business relationships through the newly established Business Advisory Panel
- ✓ Continued the advocacy for improved mobile and broadband coverage in the municipality via the Connecting Victoria Program
- ✓ Delivery of a pilot co-working space at Thomastown Library, along with the opening of an interim library hub at Galada Community Centre
- ✓ Reopened McLeans Road Kindergarten following an upgrade, offering kindergarten programs with 66 places to better meet local demand
- ✓ Partnership with Hume Whittlesea LLEN and RMIT to deliver the 'Beyond School Program,' transitioning neuro-diverse young people from school to employment

Key actions for 2023-2024

- Adopt the Agri-Food Action Plan to attract investment in the sector and support existing businesses
- Facilitate partnerships between industry, education and job seekers through targeted initiatives supporting under-employed people including people with a disability
- Develop a business grants and incentives program for business attraction and support
- Deliver industry development programs for priority sectors
- Finalise the refreshed Epping Central Structure Plan
- Continue implementing the kindergarten reform in conjunction with the Department of Education
- Open the Mernda Town Centre Community Library and commence works on the Library Hub at Kirrip Community Centre



Our iconic River Red Gums, local biodiversity and precious natural assets are protected for future generations. Locals and visitors enjoy spending time in our natural environments and our leafy suburbs. Together, we are working to reduce our impact on the environment and adapt to the changing climate.

Services



Biodiversity, land management, sustainable planning and design



Water management



Resource recovery and waste



Climate change

Our achievements during 2021-2023

- ✔ Implemented the glass recycling kerbside collection service to divert more waste from landfill
- ✔ Endorsed and commenced implementation of the Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan
- ✔ Our Rural Environment Grant Program was fully subscribed for the first time, supporting our rural landowners to protect and enhance biodiversity on their property
- ✔ Planted more than 10,000 trees and 42,000 new shrubs throughout parks and open spaces
- ✔ Installed recycling drop-off hubs at 12 locations across the municipality, making it easier and more convenient to people to drop off items including x-rays, e-waste and mobile phones
- ✔ Endorsed the Climate Change Plan

Key actions for 2023-2024

- Continue to implement the Rethinking Waste Plan to support our community to become a leader in sustainable living
- Educate our community around illegally dumped rubbish to enhance compliance, and keep the city clean via an intensive dumped rubbish program
- Continue to renew and upgrade Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park
- Continue to implement the Green Wedge Management Plan
- Improve conservation reserves fire management planning and operations
- Undertake a study to understand the current and future carrying capacity of wildlife, i.e. how many healthy wildlife numbers our Whittlesea environment can sustain now and into the future
- Continue to improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and facilities including solar and lighting upgrades
- Investigate options for introducing a local resource recovery shop
- Develop a Readiness and Activation Guideline to mitigate the effects on our community in extreme heat events, particularly to support vulnerable community members



Council engages effectively with the community, delivers efficient and effective services and initiatives, makes decisions in the best interest of the community and delivers value to the community.

Services



Our systems and knowledge



Our people



Our governance



Our finance and assets

Our achievements during 2021-2023

- ✔ Delivered a successful program of regular community touchpoints including Coffee with Council, Administrator Meet and Greets, pop-ups in shopping centres & community events, with more than 1000 people engaged at our 14 pop-ups and online forums
- ✔ Community Forums held prior to Community Council meetings
- ✔ Governance Rules updated to enable increased community participation in Council Meetings
- ✔ Workforce Plan and Gender Equity Action Plan endorsed and implementation of actions continues according to agreed timelines
- ✔ Advocacy campaign launched for State and Federal Government resulting in \$44.1m commitment for Whittlesea community, excluding the federal budget commitment of \$1.62b for the Beverage Intermodal Freight Terminal (BIFT)
- ✔ Financial hardship policy launched and implemented to support residents who are experiencing financial hardship in paying Council fees and rates
- ✔ Quarterly reporting provided to community on Budget, Community Plan and good governance

Key actions for 2023-2024

- Make it easier to interact with Council by building a customer portal, adding more services online and upgrading the city's website
- Launch a new service centre in Whittlesea township
- Continue to advocate for Council's priority projects for better community outcomes
- Continue to implement the Workforce Plan to attract and retain skilled staff to deliver for our community, including an inclusive employment program
- Continue to implement the Gender Equality Action Plan to ensure a safe and equal workplace and progress towards becoming an Employer of Choice
- Finalise the Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan
- Continue implementing our place-based service delivery model to be responsive to the needs of our local communities
- Finalise the High-Performing Organisation Strategy to guide effective and efficient use of resources, and good governance at Council
- Provide information and support to residents experiencing severe mortgage stress in line with Council's Financial Hardship Policy
- Implement Council's Research and Analytics Plan to enable informed decisions for the benefit of our community.
- Identify key initiatives that have a "direct and significant impact on community" for gender impact assessment under the Gender Equality Act 2020

Delivering value to the City of Whittlesea community*



241,190 vaccines administered
at our mass vaccination hub (Northern Health)



2,523 animals collected
78.67% reclaimed or rehomed



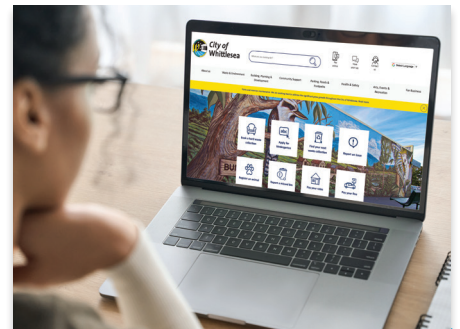
8,860,255
kerbside bins collected



606,230
library collection loans



1,110 local businesses supported
through calls, training, networking programs



> 2,000,000
visitors to our website



25,304m² of road
reconstructed



10,930 SnapSendSolve[®]
requests actioned



745 planning permits issued

*in 2021-22

We are committed to investing in technology, people and services to continuously improve our customers' experience and make it easy to engage with council. City of Whittlesea is building a Customer Portal so all members of the community can request services from the City in an easier way.

Please follow engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au and stay tuned to participate in upcoming engagement opportunities.



City of Whittlesea
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Opening hours Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm
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**Free telephone
interpreter service**
131 450

Arabic خدمة الترجمة الشفهية الهاتفية المجانية
Chinese Simplified 免费电话传译服务
Chinese Traditional 免費電話傳譯服務
Greek Δωρεάν τηλεφωνική υπηρεσία διερμηνέων
Italian Servizio di interpretariato telefonico gratuito

Macedonian Бесплатна телефонска услуга за преведување
Persian/Farsi خدمات مترجم شفاهی تلفنی رایگان
Punjabi ਮੁਫਤ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੇਵਾ
Turkish Ücretsiz telefonla tercümanlık servisi
Vietnamese Dịch vụ thông dịch qua điện thoại miễn phí