

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 22 September 2026
6:00 pm

City Hall
57 Little Malop Street, Geelong 3220

TO BE LIVE STREAMED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE:
www.geelongaustralia.com.au/meetings

COUNCIL:

Cr S Kontelj (Kardinia Ward) - Mayor
Cr E Kontelj (Hamlyn Heights Ward) - Deputy Mayor
Cr R Nelson (Barrabool Hills Ward)
Cr E Sinclair (Charlemont Ward)
Cr M Cadwell (Cheetham Ward)
Cr E Wilkinson (Connewarre Ward)
Cr A Aitken (Corio Ward)
Cr A Katos (Deakin Ward)
Cr T Sullivan (Leopold Ward)
Cr R Story (Murradoc Ward)
Cr C Burson (You Yangs Ward)

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1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

1.2. Apologies

1.3. Leaves of Absence

That Leave of Absence be granted to Cr E Kontelj from 8 September 2026 to 11 September 2026, inclusive.

1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

1.5. Confirmation of Minutes

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 August 2026 be confirmed.

1.6. Public Question and Submission Time

1.7. Petitions

1. Reinstate Two Hours of Free Parking in Geelong CBD.
2. Differential Rates for Retirement Village Residents.

2. REPORTS

2.1. Naming North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to name the North Bellarine Aquatic Centre (project name) the “Linda McGill Aquatic Centre” following a public voting process.
2. If approved submit the name to Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) for final approval and gazettal.

Background

3. The North Bellarine Aquatic Centre (NBAC) is the current project name for the leisure and recreation space at the Drysdale Sporting Precinct. Project names cannot be registered with Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) and the City is required to undertake community consultation to determine a registered name for the facility.
4. Three names were identified for public consultation, guided by the Geographic Names Victoria *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria*; and the City’s Draft Place Naming Policy (which will be considered at a future Council meeting). The shortlisted names recognise influential women with strong connections to the Bellarine region and significant contributions to the community. Each name was assessed for compliance before being presented for public vote.
5. An invitation was extended to Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) to participate in the naming of the facility. In February 2026 WTOAC thanked the City for the opportunity.. On this occasion they have chosen not to participate in the naming process.
6. City officers consulted with the Bellarine Historical Society and the NBAC Community Advisory Panel (the Panel) to identify possible names for the facility. Preference was given to those that would reflect community values, local history and align with the priorities identified in the Draft Place Naming Policy and achieve GNV compliance.
7. The three names put to public vote were:
 - 7.1. Linda McGill Aquatic Centre
 - 7.2. Jean Cull Aquatic Centre
 - 7.3. Jenny Bourke Aquatic Centre.

Key Matters

8. The primary engagement method was an online voting opportunity via the City's "Have your Say" page and supported by a targeted communications campaign that included social media posts, a front-page article in "the Bellarine times" digital signage at Splashdown and Bellarine Aquatic & Sports Centre, and email invitations to current members and recent patrons registered within the City's leisure management system.
9. The engagement methods aimed to reach the people most likely to use and identify with the new facility; with a focus on residents of the Bellarine Peninsula and existing users of NBAC.
10. 544 people contributed to the discussion. 89% of the submissions came from the greater Bellarine Peninsula region. 95% made a submission on one of the three names put forward.
11. The name with the highest level of community support was 'Linda McGill Aquatic Centre'. A further 27 submissions did not nominate a preferred name. Background information on Linda McGill is provided as an attachment to this report.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approves the use of the name "Linda McGill Aquatic Centre" as the official name of the new aquatic and leisure facility in the Drysdale Sporting Precinct;
2. Notes if approved the name "Linda McGill Aquatic Centre" will be submitted to the Geographical Names Victoria for approval and gazettal.
3. Thanks the members of the Bellarine Historical Society and the NBAC Community Advisory Panel, and all community members that took an active role in the naming process.

Financial Sustainability

12. There are no direct financial impacts for Council arising from the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

13. The City undertook significant community engagement as below.
14. City Officers, following the Draft Place Naming Policy extended an invitation to WTOAC who declined to be involved on this occasion.
15. Officers then identified the next priority group as per the Draft Place Naming Policy and begun consultation with Bellarine Historic Society and the Panel.
16. A shortlist of the names of three females with significant history and connection to the region were presented for broader community engagement.
17. The 'North Bellarine Aquatic Centre Naming' Have Your Say page opened for community engagement from Tuesday 7 July 2026 to Friday 7 August 2026, with targeted outreach to the Bellarine community.
18. Community engagement ended with 544 valid submissions, 83% of those submissions came from those with an address on the Bellarine Peninsula.

Social Equity and Sustainability

19. The recommendation takes guidance from the Draft Place Naming Policy to ensure an approach that creates a landscape that honours the City's full history and ensures everyone can see themselves represented in public spaces.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

20. No Gender+ Impact Assessment was completed as Officers determined the naming of the facility does not meet the requirements of a direct or significant impact. As part of broader gender equality, guidance was taken from the Draft Place Naming Policy, with female or gender-diverse persons being selected and shortlisted.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

21. The proposed facility name must meet the naming rules requirements under section 5 of the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (Vic). GNV oversees the naming and registration of facilities. Additionally, guidance was taken from Councils draft Place Naming Policy.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

22. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity
23. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

24. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

25. The recommendation aligns with Council's Risk Appetite, due to the community consultation undertaken, it protects public trust and aligns with Council policies and decision frameworks and is inclusive of GNV Naming Rules.
26. A failure to progress the recommendation may result in the re-opening of the facility after the completion of Stage 2 works, without an official name or signage.

Environmental Sustainability

27. There are no environmental sustainability impacts associated with the recommendation.

Attachments

1. Have Your Say Summary Report - Naming North Bellarine Aquatic Centre [2.1.1 - 9 pages]
2. Background on Linda McGill [2.1.2 - 1 page]

North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

Official Naming / August 2026



NAMING NORTH BELLARINE AQUATIC CENTRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT



North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

Official Naming / August 2026



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Introduction/Background

The City of Greater Geelong undertook community engagement to determine the official name for the facility currently known as the North Bellarine Aquatic Centre, located within the Drysdale Sporting Precinct. While "North Bellarine Aquatic Centre" has been used as the project name throughout planning, construction and the operation of Stage 1, an official name was required to meet Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) naming requirements ahead of the anticipated completion of Stage 2.

The engagement sought community feedback on three shortlisted naming options that had been identified through an earlier consultation process involving the Bellarine Historical Society and the North Bellarine Aquatic Centre Community Advisory Panel. This initial process was guided by the principles outlined in the City of Greater Geelong's draft Place Naming Policy, which recognises the importance of place names and prioritises the recognition of Aboriginal heritage, gender equity, multicultural communities, local heritage and community participation.

HOW WE ENGAGED

WHAT DID WE DO?

The primary engagement method was via online voting hosted on the City's Have Your Say platform, supported by a targeted communications campaign. To ensure the consultation took place with GNV naming rules, all other engagement options directed the community towards the Have Your Say platform.

Other promotion included social media posts, a front-page article in *The Bellarine Times*, digital signage at Splashdown and Bellarine Aquatic & Sports Centre, and email invitations to current members and recent patrons registered within the City's leisure management systems. Additionally, there were over 800 people on the Have Your Say platform who are subscribed to receive updates and notifications for projects in the Drysdale region. These methods were deliberately chosen to reach people most likely to use and identify with the facility, with a focus on residents of the Bellarine Peninsula and existing facility users.

The engagement approach aligned with GNV guidance, which encourages place naming decisions to be informed by the communities most closely connected to the place being named.

DATA METHODOLOGY

In line with GNV naming rules and guidance, the City was required to collect the full name of those making submissions their street address, town or suburb and post code. Additionally, we collected information which best described their connection to the region. This



550

Number of people to leave feedback



30 DAYS

of engagement

North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

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information helped confirm that we received feedback from the community most connected to the venue.

ENGAGEMENT TOOL AND TECHNIQUES

A project specific engagement page was developed to provide project information and methods of ways to engage with the City.

A range of engagement tools and techniques were used to provide different types of opportunities for stakeholders and community to have their say. The main tools and techniques are explained in further detail below

HOW WE ENGAGED

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE PORTAL YOURSAY.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU	A project-specific engagement page was created to share project information and outline ways the community could engage with the City. To ensure compliance with GNV naming rules, all other engagement methods were directed towards the Have Your Say portal.
DIGITAL SCREENS AT EXISTING SWIM, SPORT & LEISURE VENUES	Digital screens advertising the community consultation displayed at both Splashdown Leisure Centre and Bellarine Aquatic and Sports Centre for the duration of the consultation period.
NEWS COVERAGE	Front page article on Friday 10th July in The Bellarine Times promoting the naming process and shortlisted names, accompanied by a column by Cr Story.
EMAIL TO FACILITY MEMBERS AND USERS	Emails sent to current aquatic centre members with North Bellarine Aquatic Centre as their home club, and those with a registered visit to the venue were invited to provide their feedback.
'HAVE YOUR SAY' SUBSCRIBERS	899 people who had subscribed to Have Your Say updates for the Drysdale region
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS	10th July on the 'City of Greater Geelong' Facebook and Instagram, in addition to a post on the 14th July on the 'North Bellarine Aquatic Centre' Facebook page – resulting in over 31,000 views and over 370 clicks, reactions or interactions.
'CITY NEWS'	Included in the engagement section of City News on 24th July.

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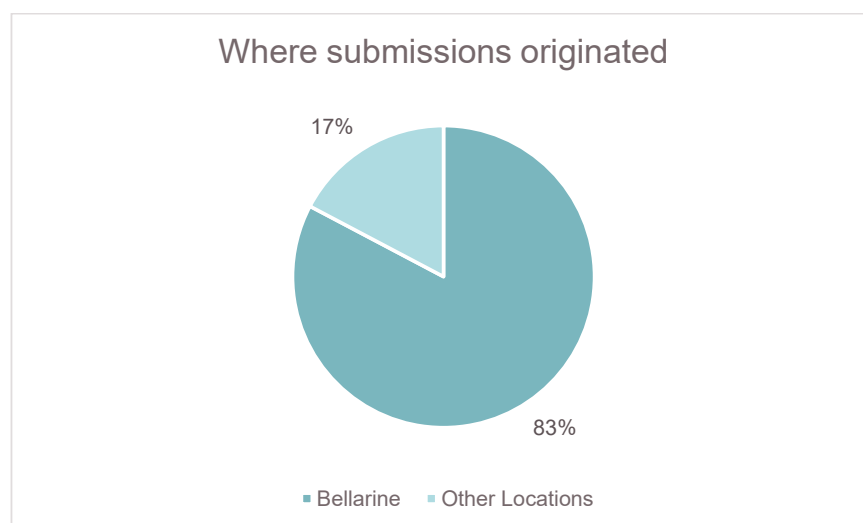
WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

PARTICIPATION

Between Tuesday 7 July, 2026 and Friday 7 August, 2026 there were more than 1,400 visitors to the Have Your Say page, and 544 valid submissions relating to the official name for North Bellarine Aquatic Centre. There were 5 submissions which were removed due to duplication.

On investigation, some of these multiple submissions may have been due to error – with duplicate submissions sometimes containing neither a vote, nor a comment. In these cases, the blank submission with no vote or no comment was removed from analysis.

83% of submissions came from those with a street address from the Bellarine Peninsula (Barwon Heads, Bellarine, Breamlea, Clifton Springs, Connewarre, Curlewis, Drysdale, Indented Head, Leopold, Mannerim, Marcus Hill, Ocean Grove, Point Lonsdale, Portarlington, Queenscliff, St Leonards, Swan Bay, and Wallington) which highlights the targeted approach to hear from those most likely to connect and make use of the facility.



North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

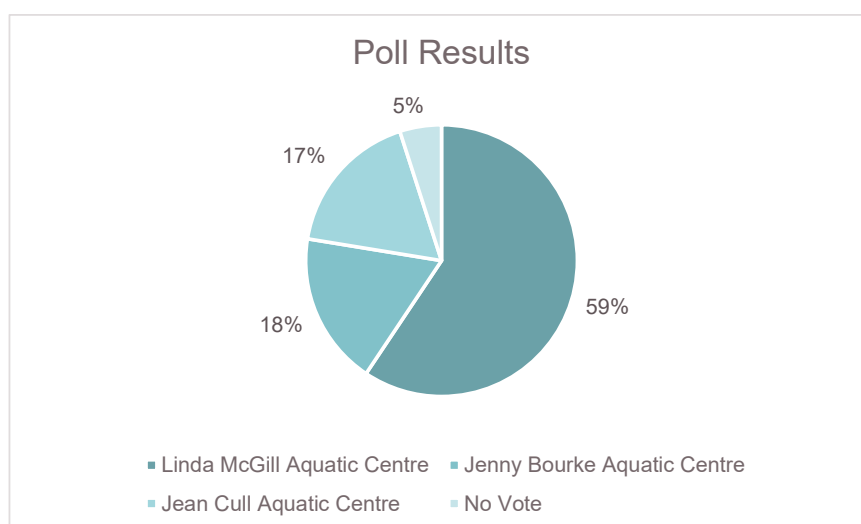
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WHAT WE HEARD

THE FEEDBACK

From the 544 valid submissions, Linda McGill Aquatic Centre was the supported name with the most number of votes at 323 votes (59% of all submissions.) Jenny Bourke Aquatic Centre attracted 99 votes (18% of all submissions) and Jean Cull Aquatic Centre attracted 95 votes (17% of all votes) The remaining 27 submissions (5% of all submissions) contained no vote for a preferred name.



196 of all total submissions included a comment (inclusive of the 27 votes detailed above with no vote for a preferred name.) Of the comments left, analysis showed that over 60% were positive, 26% were neutral, 8% were negative with the remainder being either mixed sentiment or unclassified.

Sentiment



North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

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SUBMISSION COMMENTS AND THEMES

Submission comments have been grouped together in common themes below. In line with the City's commitment to respectful and inclusive communication, individual comments containing discriminatory or offensive language have not been reproduced verbatim. However, the themes arising from this feedback have been captured and considered as part of the overall engagement analysis.

POSITIVE COMMENTS

STRONG CONNECTION TO SWIMMING

Many comments highlighted the importance of the name of an aquatic venue being reflective of someone who was a pioneer in the sport and would continue to inspire a love of swimming.

"Linda McGill was an inspiration to me in my youth and instrumental in me taking up swimming in my youth in the 1970's."

"A person who inspires others to pursue challenging aquatic endeavours would be a great choice."

"As a former swimming teacher myself, let's laud our top female swimmers so kids will learn how important swimming is as part of the Australian lifestyle."

"A swimming centre should be named after a pioneering athlete to provide inspiration for future generations of swimmers."

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Submissions highlighted and recognised the contribution that individuals had provided to the community.

"I think it would be very fitting to name our Local Aquatic Centre after Jenny Bourke, due to her many connections to the Bellarine, her lifelong commitments and contributions to the local communities."

"Her [Jean's] contributions to the community in many varying areas across the Bellarine is a wonderful example to the community and her efforts send a great message to the younger generations that their contributions, involvement and time are a valuable resource to the local community."

"All three women look like outstanding community people."

INSPIRATION TO FUTURE USERS

"I am thrilled to see the names of three incredible and inspiring women (in their own ways) nominated as the namesake for the new pool."

"This felt the most fitting for the aquatic centre to inspire the next generation of girls to dare to be the first and defy the odds."

North Bellarine Aquatic Centre

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OBJECTIONS, CONCERNS OR OTHER SUGGESTIONS

TRADITIONAL NAME SUGGESTIONS

Many submission comments highlighted the desire for greater diversity and representation of indigenous names and culture.

"Given that during the construction of the bypass a large number of indigenous artefacts were found, we can recognise that this land held significant for the local Wathaurong people."

"Sorry I prefer an indigenous name representing the area."

Response:

Taking guidance from the draft Place Naming Policy the City first engaged with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, who were invited to be involved in the naming of the facility but had limited capacity to be involved and informed us they would need to let the opportunity pass.

OTHER COMMEMORATIVE NAME SUGGESTIONS

Many comments suggested other commemorative names of people who had made strong and valuable contributions to the region and/or the advocacy of the venue itself.

"Why not name it after a local, contemporary person who does so much for Drysdale/Clifton Springs and the Bellarine ie. Anne Brackley."

"If the NBAC is to be named after a person, it should be someone who has been in the fight for a pool, for the long haul. My suggestions include Anne Brackley, Tom O'Connor, or Jim Mason."

Response:

Many of the comments aligned with this theme suggested names of those who continue to advocate strongly for the facility or contribute to the Bellarine - this shortlisting process was in line with GNV naming rules, which strongly advise against the use of names of persons still living. The consultation process with Bellarine Historical Society and the North Bellarine Aquatic Centre Community Advisory Panel took this into account when arriving at the three proposed names.

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PREFERENCE FOR EXISTING NAME

For either simplicity, continuity or recognition of the wider community efforts and advocacy around the facility, submissions highlighted the desire for the existing project name to become the official name.

"The name North Bellarine Aquatic Centre should be retained because it clearly identifies the facility with the region it serves and reinforces that it is a community asset belonging to all residents of the North Bellarine."

"The obvious choice is to call it what it is - The North Bellarine Aquatic Centre."

"I believe the Centre should be named The North Bellarine Aquatic Centre which echoes the community involvement and not just one person."

Response:

The project name of 'North Bellarine Aquatic Centre' does not meet GNV naming rules and cannot be registered as an official name.

CONCERNS OF NAMING FACILITY AFTER INDIVIDUALS

"Many people have contributed to this project, not just one person."

"This facility was funded by the community as a whole, not by the efforts or contributions of any single individual."

Response:

The City recognises that there are many individuals, community groups and organisations who have campaigned and advocated for this facility – some for many years. During the naming process we took guidance from the draft Place Naming Policy and after Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation informed us that they would need to let the opportunity pass, the next commemorative category was chosen which was female, or gender-diverse persons.

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS

Due to the overwhelming community support, taking note of the highly targeted outreach methods and engagement results, the name 'Linda McGill Aquatic Centre' will move onto the next steps as the preferred name.

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NEXT STEPS

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

The name Linda McGill Aquatic Centre will be presented for approval at the upcoming September Council meeting.

Pending approval, the name will be submitted to Geographic Names Victoria, where objectors will be given the opportunity to appeal the decision. Details of this will be provided to objectors.

Should the submitted name be upheld by Geographic Names Victoria, it will be gazetted and become the official name of the venue.

Background on Linda McGill:

Linda McGill was one of Australia's most pioneering swimmers, achieving success as a Commonwealth Games medallist, Olympian and renowned marathon swimmer.

She made history in 1965 as the first Australian to swim the English Channel and later set a women's record on a subsequent crossing. Her legacy was further cemented through her groundbreaking 25-mile swim across Port Phillip Bay from Portarlington to Frankston, completed in 13 hours, making her the first person to achieve the crossing.

As one of the first women globally to undertake such endurance feats, she helped redefine perceptions of female athletes and open-water swimming. McGill's strong connection to Port Phillip Bay and the Bellarine Peninsula continues to resonate locally, inspiring generations of swimmers and contributing to the region's enduring culture of bay swimming, endurance events and community participation.

Today, she is remembered as a trailblazer whose courage, innovation and determination left a lasting impact on Australian swimming.



2.2. Place Naming Policy

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To adopt the Draft Place Naming Policy (the Policy) following extensive community consultation and Councillor discussion.

Background

2. The City of Greater Geelong drafted a Place Naming Policy to guide the naming of public places. The policy establishes a clear, consistent and culturally informed framework aligned with legislation and community expectations.
3. The Policy complies with legislative requirements that Council must follow and responds to best practice frameworks:
 - 3.1. Geographic Place Names Act 1998.
 - 3.2. Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022).
 - 3.3. Gender Equality Strategy (2023–2027).
 - 3.4. City of Greater Geelong's Community Engagement Policy.
4. The Policy aims to shape a shared identity that reflects the City's values as a clever, creative, and caring community. It supports diversity and cultural recognition through place naming, while mitigating risks such as politicised proposals, cultural insensitivity, and legal disputes.

Key Matters

5. The policy recognises the need for a clear, consistent and culturally informed framework that aligns with legislation and community expectations. It addresses historical imbalances by increasing recognition of women, First Nations people and underrepresented cultural groups in place naming.
6. Broad internal engagement that included staff, stakeholder and Councillor consultation was undertaken. Strong feedback requested that the Policy support naming decisions through a prioritisation process.
7. Councillor feedback requested clarity regarding the process of prioritisation and the naming of spaces within a facility, which has been addressed in the Policy. Additional amendments requested by Councillors have also been incorporated to improve clarity, without changing the intent or direction of the Policy.
8. Community engagement was undertaken in March/April 2026. Officers have refined the Policy to improve clarity of its intent, scope and operation in response to feedback, but no fundamental changes to the overall direction of the policy have been made.

9. The key refinements are:
 - 9.1. The prioritisation framework has been strengthened and more clearly articulated to reinforce the recognition of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, gender equity, multicultural communities and local history. This reflects the majority community support for addressing under-representation in place naming.
 - 9.2. The role of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) has been clarified. In response to feedback from WTOAC, the Policy clearly articulates its authority in identifying culturally appropriate names. Broader community feedback also sought stronger recognition of First Nations cultural leadership in naming processes.
 - 9.3. Additional clarification has been included regarding re-naming of places, to address community misunderstanding. The policy does not introduce a broad re-naming program. Re-naming will only be considered in exceptional or compelling cases, and in line with the Naming Rules.
 - 9.4. Community engagement and decision-making processes have been refined to improve transparency. It better explains how community input informs naming decisions, responding to feedback on the need for clearer and more accessible processes.
 - 9.5. Minor drafting and structural changes have been made throughout the policy to improve readability and usability. This ensures the policy is practical to apply and addresses consistent feedback about the need for clearer communication.
10. A Gender Impact Assessment was completed and used to inform the Policy. The GIA informed the development of policy provisions relating to equitable and inclusive naming practices, establishment of a place name bank, improved governance and monitoring arrangements, and future actions to support greater diversity and representation in place naming opportunities.
11. In line with best practice and to comply with legislative requirements, the Policy commits to
 - 11.1. increasing the representation of women and multicultural communities in naming of places; and
 - 11.2. involving Traditional Owners in naming processes, as required under the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022), reinforcing cultural integrity and local knowledge.
12. Victoria's path to Treaty further reinforces the role of Traditional Owners in decisions affecting Country, including place naming.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Place Naming Policy as at Attachment 1;**
- 2. Notes the Place Naming Engagement Summary as at Attachment 2; and**
- 3. Acknowledges and thanks the community for their valuable input and feedback which helped guide the development of the Policy.**

Financial Sustainability

13. The Place Naming Policy provides a framework for decision-making and does not create any direct budget implications.
14. Costs associated with individual naming proposals, such as signage or implementation, will continue and be managed through existing budget processes.

Community Engagement

15. The Policy was developed through internal and external consultation, including engagement with WTOAC, Councillors, community stakeholders and the broader community.
16. Community engagement on the draft Policy attracted 142 responses, with feedback informing the final Policy.
17. Overall, feedback was broadly supportive, with a range of views expressed across the full spectrum of support. Of respondents who rated their level of support, 59.3% (73 respondents) indicated neutral to very supportive views of the draft Policy (rating of 50 or above), while 40.7% (49 respondents) indicated lower levels of support or opposition (rating below 50).
18. A detailed summary of feedback received is provided in the attached Community Engagement Report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

19. The Policy promotes greater equity and inclusion by promoting recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage, women, culturally diverse communities and other groups that have historically been underrepresented in place naming.
20. A Gender Impact Assessment informed the development of the Policy, and the prioritisation framework has been designed to support more balanced and representative outcomes over time.
21. The Policy also supports community connection, cultural recognition and belonging through inclusive naming practices

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

22. A Gender+ Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the policy development process.
23. The assessment identified significant underrepresentation of women and other historically underrepresented groups in commemorative place naming locally and more broadly across Victoria.
24. The assessment concluded that the proposed policy would have a positive impact by supporting more inclusive and representative naming outcomes over time.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

25. The Policy has been developed in accordance with the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022).
26. The Policy supports Council's responsibilities as a naming authority and provides a clear local framework for naming and re-naming proposals.
27. Legal advice has informed the development of the Policy.
28. The Policy has also been prepared with consideration of Council's Community Engagement Policy, the Gender Equality Strategy 2023–2027 and Council's obligations under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

29. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority: Healthy and Caring Community
30. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration: An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

31. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

32. Place naming decisions can attract significant community interest and may present reputational and governance risks where decision-making processes are unclear or inconsistent.
33. Council aims to make transparent and inclusive decisions that reflect the municipality's diverse histories, cultures and communities. In this context, Council has adopted a balanced risk appetite.
34. The Place Naming Policy supports informed and defensible decision-making by establishing a clear, consistent and legislatively compliant framework for considering naming proposals, community feedback and Traditional Owner perspectives.

Environmental Sustainability

35. The Policy is administrative in nature and is not expected to have any direct environmental sustainability impacts.
36. Environmental considerations associated with individual projects will continue to be assessed through relevant planning and approval processes.

Attachments

1. Place Naming Policy Final [2.2.1 - 14 pages]
2. Place Naming Policy - Community Engagement Summary Report [2.2.2 - 9 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PLACE NAMING POLICY

VERSION: One

TYPE OF POLICY: Council

APPROVAL DATE: TBC

REVIEW DATE: TBC

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Manager Urban Design & Place

AUTHORISING OFFICER: *Executive Director, Growth & Place*

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Introduction

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a clear and consistent approach for the naming and re-naming of places, ie roads, facilities, council assets, features, open spaces and localities within the municipality.

It provides direction to the City of Greater Geelong (the City) in complying with its responsibilities under the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (the Act), ensuring that all naming decisions reflect community values and align with the City's local priorities. Formal naming processes and requirements are governed by the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.

The Policy promotes inclusive practices by prioritising Aboriginal heritage, gender equity, cultural recognition, local history, and meaningful community engagement. undertaken in accordance with the City's Community Engagement Policy and the Naming Rules

SCOPE

The Policy:

- Applies to all place naming and re-naming of existing places that are owned and operated by and/or the responsibility of the City.
- Provides a structured framework for local government officers, stakeholders, developers, proponents, and community members involved in naming proposals.
- Accommodates naming proposals that may be council-led, community-led, or developer/proponent-led.
- Does not apply to the naming of assets, roads, freeways, features, parks, or places of geographical significance that are the responsibility of other naming authorities.

BACKGROUND

The City, as the responsible authority, names places to recognise and reflect the culture, heritage and landscape of our region and add value to our identity as a region.

Place names must be easily and uniquely recognisable to ensure identification by emergency services, for the delivery of goods and services, and to ensure community recognition.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The place naming process responds to the following legislative and regulatory requirements:

- *Geographical Names Act 1998* (Victoria).
- *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria* (2007) and subsequent amendments.
- *Australian/New Zealand Address Standards* (AS 4819:2011).
- *Our equal state: Victoria's gender equality strategy and action plan 2023-2027*.
- City of Greater Geelong Community Engagement Policy.

All proposed names must comply with these regulations.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

TERM	DEFINITION
The City	The City of Greater Geelong organisation, led by the CEO.
Council	The City of Greater Geelong Council comprising elected councillors and led by the Mayor.
City Officer	Includes employees, volunteers and contractors.
Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical and intangible attributes, natural resources, and values that a community inherits from past generations, maintains in the present, and transmits to future generations for their benefit. First Nations cultural heritage encompasses the living knowledge, spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, and physical elements that are significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Executive Director	Is a senior leader who manages one of the four directorates, forming the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) under the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
Place	Road - any public or private land-based thoroughfare or path navigable by vehicle or foot registered under the Victorian Road Management Act 2004. Examples of roads include streets, lanes, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks. Feature - A unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape, such as a park, nature reserve, sportsground, or pavilion. Locality - A geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics. Asset – a structure, building, community centre, recreational facility or other significant infrastructure (Note, when referring to the Naming Rules, our assets are referred to as a feature).
Minor Place	A minor place is a feature, locality, or asset that may be informally named for asset management or temporary identification, such as internal rooms, small structures, lesser open spaces, or licensed reserves renamed by leaseholders.
Authority	Government authorities such as Vic Roads, Parks Victoria, Department of Education which are naming authorities for Places that they own or maintain.
GNV	Geographic Names Victoria.

TERM	DEFINITION
Registrar	State Government's Registrar of Geographic Names.
Naming Rules	Mandatory statutory requirements of GNV for naming roads, features, localities and assets.
Naming Principles	Principles that must be used in conjunction with the Naming Rules related to roads, features, localities and assets. All naming principles are of equal importance.
WTOAC	Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
Immediate Community	The community directly affected by the naming proposal, includes residents, ratepayers, businesses, community groups.
Broader Community	The community indirectly affected by the naming proposal, includes residents, ratepayers, businesses, community groups.

Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The City is committed to ensuring that all place naming and re-naming decisions are made in a consistent, transparent, and inclusive manner. In line with community values, and compliant with legal requirements and the Naming Rules, the City will prioritise the recognition of Aboriginal heritage, gender equity, local heritage and active community involvement throughout the naming process.

The City acknowledges the diversity of our community and is committed to respecting and reflecting this diversity by prioritising the naming of places that address the current underrepresentation of First Nations Peoples and names of women and gender diverse people, and culturally diverse populations, until a more balanced and inclusive representation is achieved.

This Policy provides a framework and direction for making naming decisions, whether initiated by the City, the community, or proponents to ensure that place names respectfully reflect the diversity and heritage of the municipality.

Roles and responsibilities in place naming table included at Attachment 2.

Detailed procedures to support the implementation of this Policy are provided in the Place Naming Guidelines.

NAMING PRINCIPLES

When considering and proposing a name, as the responsible naming authority the City must comply with and adhere to the following Naming Principles as outlined in the Naming Rules:

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022 – Naming Principles	
Principle A) Ensuring public safety	Principle H) Dual names
Principle B) Recognising the public interest	Principle I) Using commemorative names
Principle C) Linking the name to place	Principle J) Using commercial and business names
Principle D) Ensuring names are not duplicated	Principle K) Language
Principle E) Recognition and use of Traditional Owners languages	Principle L) Directional names to be avoided
Principle F) Names must not discriminate or be offensive	Principle M) Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality
Principle G) Gender equality	

All Naming Principles are of equal importance.

1. PRIORITISATION

The City acknowledges that the current commemorative landscape does not reflect our community's diversity. Historically, public place names have disproportionately honoured males. To address this imbalance, and meet legislative requirements, the City is committed to improving recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage, promoting gender equality, and embracing broader cultural diversity.

Victoria's path to Treaty further strengthens the expectation that Traditional Owners hold a distinct, non-competitive role in decisions affecting Country - including place naming. In line with this direction, the City respects Wadawurrung Traditional Owners cultural authority and ensures Aboriginal naming is considered through a dedicated process.

A prioritisation approach to naming decisions is to ensure a transparent, fair process that reflects community values. This approach creates a commemorative landscape that honours our full history and ensures everyone can see themselves represented in public spaces.

At the City the following prioritisation rules apply:

Name priority and decision making (listed in order of priority)

1. Aboriginal names.

The City will use a rotation model for the following commemorative categories:

2. Female or gender-diverse person (eg advocate, leader, educator, notable community member).
3. Multicultural figure (eg, migrant, refugee, leader, changemaker)
4. Local hero (eg veteran, role-model, volunteer, champion, humanitarian)
5. A significant name based on community relevance, historical importance, landmark, environment or location as per the Naming Rules.

- 1.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage is a priority in naming places. In agreement with the City and in accordance with the Naming Rules, The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) may choose at their discretion and having regard to capacity and cultural priorities, to identify appropriate opportunities for naming Places, ensuring that names are culturally appropriate and meaningful. This occurs alongside, and does not replace, the consideration of Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs), which identify areas of cultural significance and must also inform naming priorities.

If WTOAC choose not to participate in a naming process, the City will prioritise commemorative naming across women, gender diverse people, multicultural communities and locally significant people or themes, to support balanced representation over time. Naming proposals that commemorate the histories, contributions or presence of women, gender diverse people, multicultural, migrant or refugee communities should be considered. This includes:

- 1.1.1 Recognising the stories and names of early or significant women, gender diverse people, migrants, refugees or migrant communities.
- 1.1.2 Enabling naming in community languages where consistent with Naming Rules.
- 1.1.3 Include inclusive engagement processes when such names are proposed.
- 1.2 Evaluation of such proposals will be delivered as per the Naming Rules, be assessed on cultural appropriateness, local relevance, and community support and include consultation with relevant cultural organisations or community representatives and have family approval (1.7).
- 1.3 The City is committed to improving gender equity in place naming and re-naming where appropriate. In support of the Victorian Government's objective to increase the commemoration of women in place naming, the City will prioritise opportunities to recognise significant women and gender-diverse people when considering the naming of places after individuals, with the ambition of progressing towards the Government's 70% commemorative naming objective.

- 1.4 If 70% of new or renamed places to be named after individuals have been named after significant women and gender-diverse people, subsequent naming proposals may include individuals of any gender.

The Policy additionally requires that:

- 1.5 naming proposals are consistent with the City of Greater Geelong's Clever and Creative vision.
- 1.6 naming of regional (municipal-wide) sporting facilities should be named based on reference to place to highlight regional significance, examples: Geelong Baseball Centre, Geelong Hockey Centre.
- 1.7 all proposed naming of places in honour of people, must have family approval before submission to the Registrar.

2. USING COMMEMORATIVE NAMES

Naming often commemorates an event, person, or place: If named after a person, that person should have been one held in high regard by the community.

When deciding on the assignment of a commemorative name, Council must:

- 2.1 consider the person's achievements
- 2.2 consider relevant history and association to the area
- 2.3 identify the significance of the family/person to the area or land, for example, a family that has been associated with an area for at least 25 years
- 2.4 consult with and gain support from the family of the person to be acknowledged
- 2.5 consult with WTOAC for truth-telling history on the name to ensure that it hasn't negatively impacted First Nations people.

The names of people who are alive are to be avoided as per the Naming Rules because community attitudes and opinions can change over time. Names of people who are alive can only be proposed if exemption has first been sought and gained from the Registrar.

Commemorative names of a deceased person can only be proposed or applied no less than two years posthumously as per the Naming Rules.

3. OTHER NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

On occasion, and at Council's discretion, parts or elements of a place may be named for asset management and identification purposes, having regard to community interest or the nature of the facility. This may include rooms within a facility, minor structures such as shelters or street furniture, or less significant open spaces such as drainage or walkway reserves, or stormwater assets.

- 3.1 Naming of places for asset management and identification purposes will be determined by Open Space Planning and Corporate Asset Management teams or other City teams as relevant to the asset and community engagement requirements will align with the City's Community Engagement Policy, with the scale of engagement proportionate to the type and significance of the naming.
- 3.2 Temporary naming of sports grounds, pavilions and relevant sporting infrastructure held by seasonal or annual leaseholders to be determined by the City's Sponsorship & Advertising Signage Policy (currently draft) or tenancy arrangements.
- 3.3 Separate names for different parts of the same place are to be avoided wherever possible to minimise site name confusion and maintain clarity in place identification.
- 3.4 Where a name has been suggested by Council or community for a part of a place, and there is a clearly defined boundary between one space and another, or a distinct feature on a building that

warrants a separate name (e.g. an auditorium within a community hub) these can be considered utilising the same prioritisation and process outlined in this policy.

4. TYPES OF NAMING PROPOSALS

Naming proposals may be council-led, community-led or developer/proponent-led.

- 4.1 Initiated by the City, often driven by strategic planning, historical importance, or public need.
- 4.2 Submitted by community members, local organisations, residents, by petition, or recommended following community consultation.
- 4.3 Proposed by developers or project proponents as part of new residential or commercial property developments, in line with Naming Rules and following community consultation.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement for place naming will be undertaken in accordance with the City's Community Engagement Policy and the Naming Rules.

- 5.1 Once the need for a naming proposal has been identified the engagement process is to be undertaken as per the Community Engagement Policy and the Naming Rules, this includes seeking feedback or submissions regarding the proposal/s.
- 5.2 Community engagement is to be conducted early in the process. This helps ensure that proposed names are relevant, supported, and reflective of local identity. Engagement must occur before any formal submission is made to Council, the Executive Director, or the Registrar.
- 5.3 For names provided by WTOAC, engagement with the broader community will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with GNV and the Registrar.

6. NAME BANK

A Name Bank is maintained by the City to support future naming opportunities such as roads, public spaces and facilities.

- 6.1 The City coordinates naming opportunities through the Name Bank and internal processes to manage prioritisation, timing and engagement. The Name Bank is not a public document but is shared with naming authorities, developers or proponents as required.
- 6.2 Names included in the Name Bank will reflect the City's commitment to Aboriginal culture, gender equity, cultural recognition and community representation.
- 6.3 The Name Bank may include a list of approved Wadawurrung language words supplied by the WTOAC. Cultural names are managed in consultation with WTOAC for final approval and endorsement.
- 6.4 Names will be added to the Name Bank through structured processes including community engagement, internal review and collaboration with stakeholders such as historical societies, libraries, Community Advisory Committees etc.

7. NAMING ROADS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL SUBDIVISIONS

Developers and proponents are required to consult with the City when selecting names for roads and open spaces in new subdivisions; this is part of the subdivision certification process.

- 7.1 The City's Property & Valuations, Open Space Planning and Corporate Asset Management teams will work collaboratively with any Place Naming Working Group, Surveyor and Developer to develop road names that are compliant with the Naming Rules and this Policy.

- 7.2 Developers may submit suggested names as per this Policy or select names from the City's Name Bank.

8. FEES

At times there will be fees associated with proposing names of places.

- 8.1 All applicable fees including for Traditional Owner engagement, consultation fees and other out of pocket costs, must be paid by the naming proponent unless otherwise agreed with the City of Greater Geelong.
- 8.2 In instances where a development requires new road names to function, and the name is taken from the City's Name Bank, the naming proponent must cover any/all fees.
- 8.3 Where the City is the proponent, the fees must be paid by the relevant Directorate branch.

9. NAMING DECISION-MAKING TYPES

The decision-making types are as follows:

- 9.1 *Council Decision*: proposed naming decisions required to be resolved by Council at a Council Meeting for submission to the GNV Registrar, following recommendations from a Place Naming Working Group and based on the outcomes of community consultation (refer Section 4). Where a name is provided by WTOAC, Council will adopt the name, subject to compliance with the Naming Rules, and progress it through the required approval and registration process.
- 9.2 *City Decision*: proposed naming decisions to be approved by ELT or delegated officers at the City as per the Naming Rules and the Roads Management Act. This applies for naming proposals regarding:
- 9.2.1 new names on plans of subdivisions
 - 9.2.2 naming of existing open spaces, and
 - 9.2.3 decisions on preferred names for consultation
- 9.3 All proposed names, either determined by Council or relevant Executive Director, must be submitted to GNV Registrar for formal registration to ensure consistency with Victoria's Naming Rules.
- 9.4 In the instance of any inconsistencies between this Policy and the Naming Rules, the Naming Rules will apply, and any proposed names put forward that are inconsistent with this Policy and/or the Naming Rules will be determined by the Registrar.

10. RE-NAMING OF PLACES

- 10.1 Re-naming of Places may, in exceptional or compelling cases, be considered in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, following a request or proposal by community or the City.
- 10.2 The re-naming process follows all the same steps as naming new places in this Policy and is to adhere to the same regulations, naming rules and principles.

Implementation of this Policy

11. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Be provided on an as required basis to ELT and Councillors.

12. ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer for this Policy manages the provision of advice to the organisation regarding this Policy.

A person who is uncertain how to comply with this Policy should seek advice from this person or from their Manager.

13. RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy.

The City will maintain a publicly accessible, up-to-date Place Naming Register that records all named and renamed places, as defined in this Policy, across the municipality. This register will enable ongoing analysis of naming trends and support transparent reporting on progress toward addressing historical inequities, including gender and cultural representation in place naming.

Responsibility for annual reporting, and maintenance of the Name Bank and Place Naming Register sits with Manager Urban Design & Place. All reports must be retained in accordance with the City's Records Information Management Policy.

14. REVIEW

The City should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy at the second anniversary (2 years) of the Approval Date, or when the current Naming Rules are updated.

References

Legislation

Local Government Act 2020 (Victoria)

Roads Management Act 2004

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Geographic Place Names Act 1998

Other Documents

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2007) and subsequent amendments

Australian /New Zealand Address Standards (AS 4819:2011)

Our equal state: Victoria's gender equality strategy and action plan 2023-2027

Policies

City of Greater Geelong:

Community Engagement Policy

Records Information Management Policy

Plaques and Memorials Policy

Public Art Strategy 2025-28

Geelong Brand Guidelines 2017

Sponsorship & Advertising Signage Policy (draft)

Attachment one

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities in Place Naming

Role	Responsibilities	Applicable Stages
City of Greater Geelong – Corporate Asset Management	Provide input on naming proposals for infrastructure Collaborate with other City teams and stakeholders	Evaluation of naming proposals Implementation of the policy
City of Greater Geelong – Executive Leadership Team (ELT) or Delegated Officers	Approve naming decisions not requiring Council resolution Endorse preferred names for consultation	Decision-making for road names, open spaces, and preferred names
City of Greater Geelong – Open Space Planning	Provide input on naming proposals for public open space Work with proponents and other City teams	Evaluation and support for naming of open spaces
City of Greater Geelong – Property & Valuations	Coordinate naming processes- Ensure compliance with Naming Rules Liaise with the Registrar Maintain and manage the Name Bank	Throughout naming and re-naming process Submission to GNV Registrar
Council (City of Greater Geelong)	Resolve naming decisions that require formal Council approval Consider recommendations and community feedback	Formal Council decision-making (Section 9.2)
Developers / Naming Proponents	Consult with the City early in the process Propose names or use the Name Bank- Undertake community engagement (excluding Wadawurrung names) Cover relevant fees and costs unless otherwise agreed	New subdivisions and place naming Engagement and name submission
Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) Registrar	Assess and register proposed names Ensure consistency with Victoria's Naming Rules Resolve inconsistencies	Final registration and compliance assurance
Place Naming Working Group (when convened)	Assess naming proposals Recommend names to Council or ELT	Review and recommendation stage

Role	Responsibilities	Applicable Stages
	Ensure alignment with principles and policy	
Surveyors	Collaborate with developers and City staff Ensure naming proposals meet regulatory requirements- Submit formal plans	During preparation of subdivision or development plans
Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation	Identify and provide Wadawurrung names where opportunities arise Approve cultural name use- Consult as needed on naming requests	Cultural naming initiation Direct naming decisions (Section 9.1)

DRAFT PLACE NAMING POLICY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT – JUNE 2026

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Community and stakeholder feedback on the draft Place Naming Policy was broadly supportive, with a wide range of views expressed and responses spanning the full spectrum of support.

Many respondents expressed strong support for the policy's intent, structure and prioritisation approach, while a smaller number expressed opposition, often framed in broader objections to equity-based policy approaches, rather than to the operational detail of the draft policy itself.

A portion of feedback reflected misunderstandings about what the draft policy does and does not do, particularly in relation to renaming existing places and the application of prioritisation principles.

These views have been recorded as part of the engagement process and will not effect change in the draft policy itself. These responses highlighted areas where clearer communication about policy intent and operation will be beneficial.

A total of 122 respondents rated their level of support on a scale from 0 (no support) to 100 (strong support).

- 59.3 per cent of respondents (73 people) rated their support at 50 or above, indicating neutral to supportive views of the draft policy.
- 40.7 per cent of respondents (49 people) rated their support below 50, indicating lower levels of support or opposition.

Within these results:

- 33.6 per cent of respondents (41 people) provided the highest possible rating (100), indicating strong endorsement of the policy.
- 12.3 per cent of respondents (15 people) provided a rating of 0, indicating no support.

Supportive feedback highlighted the value of having a clear and consistent framework for place naming and recognised Council's role in addressing historical imbalances in how people and cultures are represented through place names. Many respondents supported the policy's alignment with legislative requirements and its intent to improve transparency and consistency in decision-making.

Feedback from respondents with lower levels of support reflected a range of perspectives.

In line with the City's commitment to respectful and inclusive communication, individual comments containing discriminatory or offensive language have not been reproduced verbatim. The related themes have been captured and considered as part of the overall engagement analysis.

Themes included concerns about the policy's emphasis on equity and cultural recognition, as well as a broader opposition to equity-based approaches to place naming. Others reflected general disagreement with the intent of addressing historical underrepresentation in place naming.

Alongside both strongly supportive and strongly opposing views, a number of respondents provided constructive suggestions. These focused on implementation, clarity and community understanding, including suggestions related to communication, explanation of place names and transparency in decision-making.

HOW WE ENGAGED

WHAT DID WE DO?

Engagement with key stakeholders was undertaken throughout 2025, followed by broader community engagement between March and April 2026.

The draft Place Naming Policy was released for public comment for a period of just over three weeks with engagement designed to test the proposed principles and framework and seek feedback prior to finalisation.

2025 engagement activities included:

- Internal engagement with relevant Council staff
- Engagement with Councillors
- Engagement with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, in line with legislative and best-practice requirements and Cultura, Geelong's regulatory multicultural body.

2026 engagement activities included:

- A public survey supported by a communications campaign inviting community feedback on the draft policy
- Internal engagement with relevant Council staff
- Further engagement with Councillors
- Engagement with the Heritage Advisory Committee.

The engagement approach sought to ensure appropriate involvement of Traditional Owners and key stakeholders, while providing opportunities for community-wide input.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



23 DAYS
of public
engagement



1,111
Number of page views
on Have Your Say



321
The number of
times the draft
policy was
downloaded from
the HYS page.



142
Number of
people to leave
feedback

ENGAGEMENT TOOL AND TECHNIQUES

A project specific engagement page was developed on Have Your Say to provide project information and ways to engage with the City.

A range of engagement tools and techniques were used to provide different types of opportunities for stakeholders and community to have their say.

The main tools and techniques used were:

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE PORTAL YOURSAY.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU

An online HYS project page was designed to share relevant information to encourage community feedback.

SURVEY (ONLINE AND HARDCOPY)

Survey available via the Have You Say page.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Open at any time during the public engagement period. Submissions could be provided by email or mail.

COMMUNICATIONS

The engagement with community was promoted both online and in traditional media.

Social media channels:

SOCIAL MEDIA



21,332

Reach/Impressions

1,890

Actions (Clicks, reactions, shares, comments etc.)



18,092

Reach/Impressions on Facebook

3,240

Reach/Impressions on Instagram



54

Mentions on radio

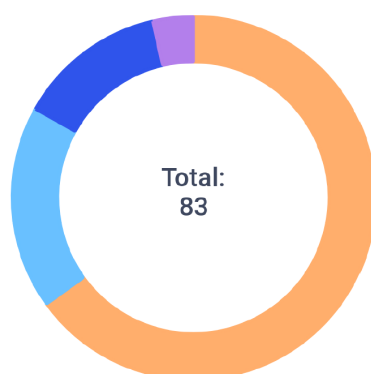


11

Newspaper mentions

Traditional media channels:

Total mentions by media type over the selected coverage period.



Radio:	54 (65.1%)
Online:	15 (18.1%)
Print:	11 (13.3%)
Influencer Social:	3 (3.6%)
TV:	0 (0%)

Coverage Volume Timeline

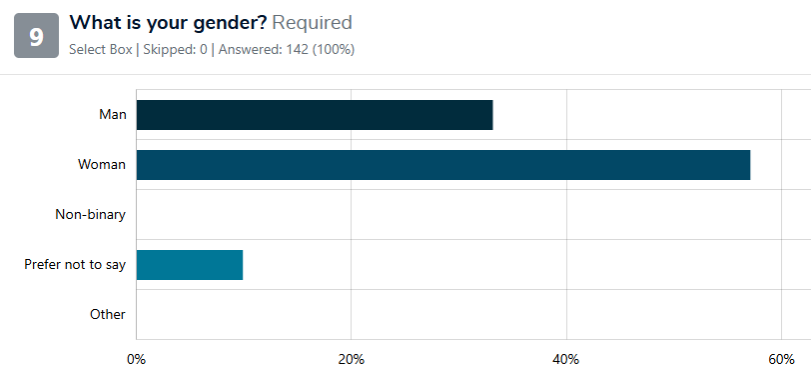
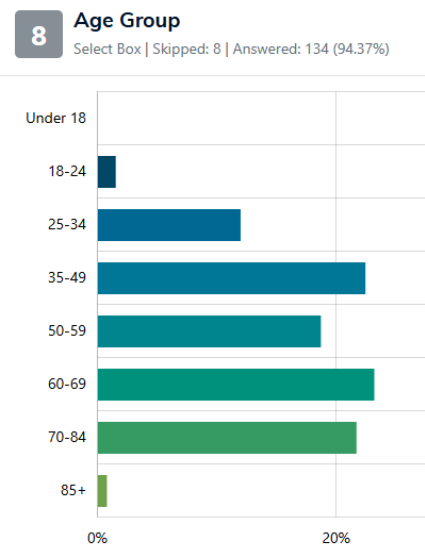
83 items over 47 days

WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

PARTICIPATION

During March and April more than 140 community members engaged with the City about the draft Place Naming Policy.

The community were invited to share some demographic data with us, primarily through our HYS survey. The following is a snapshot of these people:



Respondent gender balance showed 33.1% identified as male and 57% as female. A further 9.8% preferred not to identify.

A broad cross-section of locality was achieved with 38 of 62 suburbs represented (61%) with 91.49% of respondents identifying as residents of the Greater Geelong region.

WHAT WE HEARD

THE FEEDBACK

A number of key issues and opportunities were identified through community and stakeholder engagement on the Draft Place Naming Policy. Engagement included both quantitative inputs (online contributions and sentiment scoring) and qualitative feedback (open-text responses), providing both measurable trends and deeper insight into community views.

Overall, engagement generated moderate participation, with over 1100 page views and more than 140 direct contributions. Sentiment was mixed but leaned to positive, with average support sitting at just over 60 out of 100.

A consistent theme across all engagement channels was that place naming is a strongly held issue for the community, with diverse and sometimes opposing views expressed.

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS

The engagement sought both qualitative and quantitative feedback. Quantitative data (e.g. sentiment scoring and participation rates) provided an overall indication of support levels, while qualitative responses highlighted the depth and complexity of community views and helped identify key themes.

The data shows:

- Generally sentiment was mixed but overall more positive
- Feedback revealed both strong support and strong opposition, rather than a clear consensus
- A small number of key issues were raised consistently across responses

Verbatim comments have been included where they are constructive and representative. Comments containing language that is disrespectful, discriminatory or likely to detract from a balanced understanding of the feedback have not been reproduced verbatim. These themes have been summarised.

KEY THEMES

Recognition of First Nations heritage

Identified as the most prominent theme across responses. Many participants strongly supported prioritising Aboriginal place names as an important step toward recognition, reconciliation, and reflecting cultural heritage. There was also a clear cohort of responses expressing concern about over-prioritisation, including views about fairness and usability (e.g. pronunciation and spelling).

Sample verbatim feedback:

"I strongly support a naming approach that prioritises First Nations language, recognising its vital role as a living cultural education tool within our community. Embedding Indigenous names helps build understanding, respect, and awareness of the history, stories, and ongoing connection of First Nations peoples to place - an important step in ensuring this culture receives the recognition it deserves."

"...Regarding the use of indigenous names I also support this, and the rationale the policy presented to prioritise language in place naming. The more Aboriginal language is used, the more familiar it will become. Through this, I hope a more widespread respect of Wadawurrung people & tradition."

"Dual naming (English and Indigenous) be used where appropriate, to balance cultural recognition with practical clarity."

"We need more places named in Wadawurrung language as the first language of the region. This should not be limited/mandated at 6 per year but instead depends on if a Traditional name is known that can be returned to Country - or a new name may be used if it is a place of significance."

Some respondents expressed concern about the inclusion and prioritisation of First Nations naming, particularly where this was perceived as limiting or influencing broader naming choices.

Prioritisation of specific group

The proposed prioritisation of First Nations people, women, and other underrepresented groups generated mixed feedback. Some respondents supported this as a necessary corrective to historical imbalance, while a smaller proportion perceived it as inequitable or exclusionary.

Sample verbatim feedback:

"Its magnificent and congrats. You have clearly viewed the policy through a gender lens and also clearly articulate priorities and importantly how you will achieve the priorities particularly around equality in commemorative naming."

"...in the present naming should be equal without mandates, purely based on merit or achievement."

"I worry that the inclusion of gender diverse people alongside women has the potential to dilute the representation of women... however, I fully support exceptional members of any and all minority groups to be duly recognised."

"I recognise that there is inequity in the way places have been named in Geelong in the past and support council's actions to redress this so that our city can reflect our community."

"I strongly support prioritising the naming of places to address the current underrepresentation of First Nations Peoples and names of women and gender diverse people, and culturally diverse populations. It's a no-brainer and long overdue. Thanks for taking this important step"

A smaller number of responses reflected broader opposition to the policy's equity-based approach, including disagreement with the intent to address historical underrepresentation through prioritised naming.

Recognition of local people and history

There was strong and consistent support for naming places after local individuals and recognising community contributions. Many respondents felt this should remain a central principle and, for some, should take precedence over other considerations.

Sample verbatim feedback:

“As a multicultural nation we need to include all nations in new names.”

“We are all members of this community equally naming rights should be reserved for those who genuinely deserve it. Things ought to be named after community heroes - who cares what their background is.”

“Many migrants that have come to Geelong have played a significant part in shaping Geelong & should be recognised. People who have played a major part in the health & education systems in Geelong should be recognised.”

“In my opinion, we should be using place names of famous Geelong residents and historical significance to Geelong.”

Practicality and usability of names

A recurring theme was the importance of names being easy to pronounce, spell, and use in everyday contexts. This was often raised in relation to both First Nations names and naming more broadly, with respondents highlighting impacts on navigation, communication, and accessibility.

Sample verbatim feedback:

“Names should be easy to spell, pronounce, search, and remember for the majority of the community, and guided by practical, common-sense considerations.”

“I suggest the council consider using clear English place names alongside Indigenous names—for example, an English name as the primary identifier, with the Indigenous name included as a subtitle or secondary reference. This would allow cultural recognition while still maintaining clarity and ease of use for the broader community.”

Renaming existing places

Feedback indicated a level of concern about the potential for renaming existing places, with some respondents raising risks of confusion or disruption. While some respondents supported renaming in principle, many expressed a preference for focusing on new developments rather than established locations.

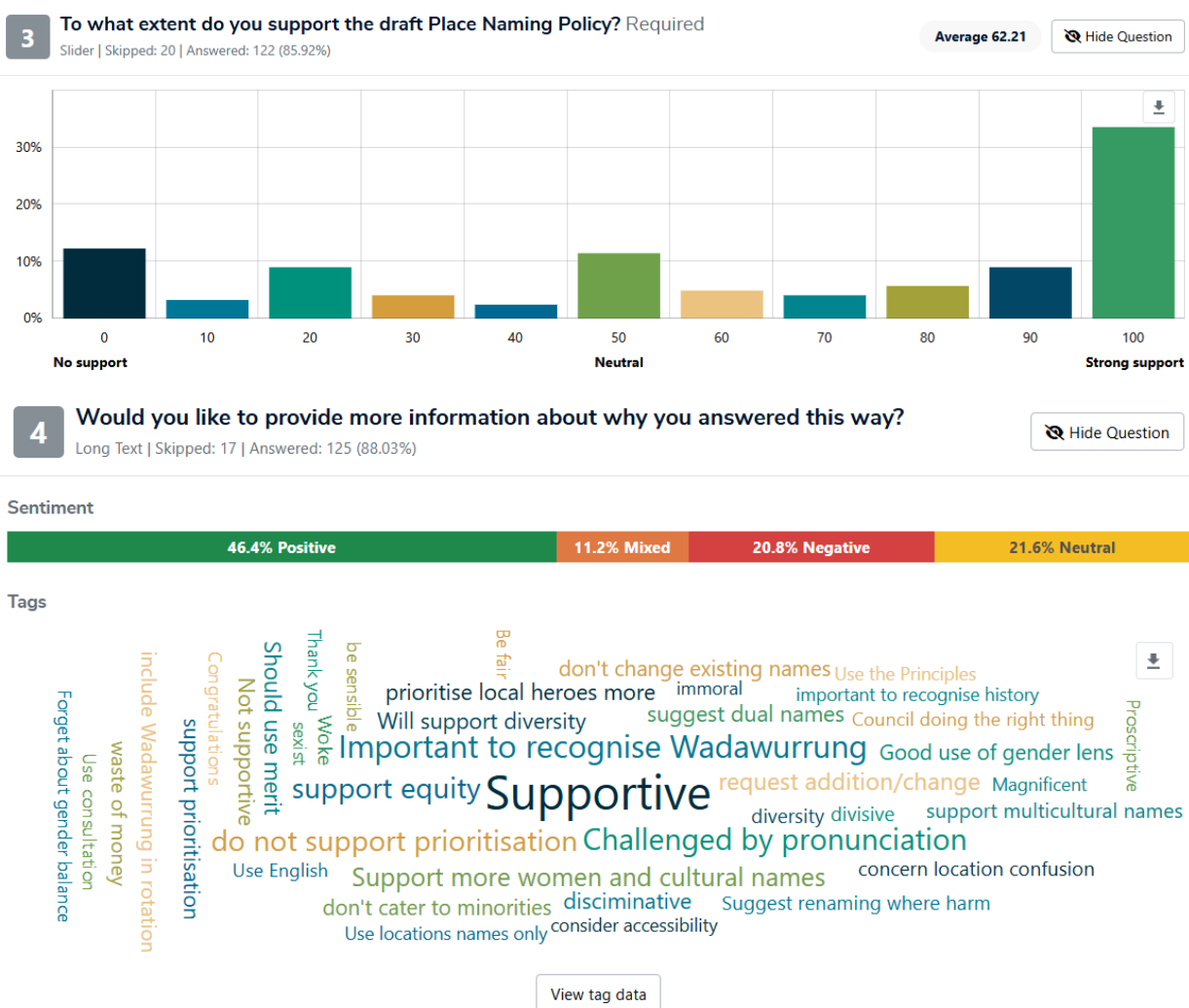
It is important to note that the Draft Place Naming Policy does not propose a program of renaming existing places. Renaming may occur in limited circumstances in line with the Naming Rules, but the primary focus of the policy is to guide the naming of new places and ensure a consistent, transparent decision-making process.

Similarities and differences across engagement methods

While the available data does not fully disaggregate results by method, the overall pattern suggests:

- Similar themes were raised consistently across the engagement
- Open-text feedback (particularly online submissions) captured stronger and more polarised views
- Quantitative measures (e.g. sentiment scoring) indicate a more moderate overall position than the qualitative comments alone might suggest

This indicates that while highly engaged participants expressed strong views, both supportive and opposed, the broader participant group showed an overall level of support.



When asked “Is there anything further that should be added or changed to the draft policy?” 85 of the 136 people responded.

While a small proportion of responses to the final open-ended question were clearly positive or clearly negative, most were constructive and focused on potential improvements, and 14 indicating no further comment or general support for the draft.

Participants generally used this question to suggest refinements rather than express a simple supportive or opposing view. The most common suggestions related to the prioritisation framework, stronger recognition of local people and history, clearer communication about renaming, the practical usability of names, and opportunities for dual naming.

WHAT WE DID AND NEXT STEPS

CONCLUSION/NEXT STEPS

The engagement process has provided valuable insight into community and stakeholder views on the Draft Place Naming Policy. Feedback highlighted both strong support for the policy's intent and areas of concern or misunderstanding, particularly in relation to prioritisation approaches and the practical application of naming principles.

Based on these themes no fundamental changes to the overall direction of the policy are anticipated, with the engagement confirming general support for a clear, consistent and inclusive approach to place naming. Some refinements are expected to be made to the draft policy to improve clarity, address common points of confusion, and support community understanding.

The draft policy will be updated following this further work, with the final policy and accompanying report to be presented to Council for consideration at a meeting before the end of 2026.

2.3. Draft Public Realm Framework

Source: Growth & Place
Interim Executive Director: Jacqueline Randles

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement for Stage 2 community engagement on the Draft Public Realm Framework, which guides planning, design, delivery and renewal of streets and public spaces across all of Greater Geelong's activity centres, both existing and growth areas.

Background

2. The Draft Public Realm Framework (the Framework) recognises the critical role of local activity centres to Geelong's economy and community life.
3. The Framework focuses on improving the performance of activity centres through guiding the public realm outcomes, to achieve increased foot traffic, dwell time, visitation and the overall attractiveness of activity centres as places for business, investment and community use.
4. The Framework establishes an integrated approach to improve the public realm in Greater Geelong's activity centres through:
 - 4.1. Defining the Place Character of each centre (Central, Urban, Coastal and Rural);
 - 4.2. Outlining Design Principles; and
 - 4.3. Providing Place-specific Design Directions for each public realm type (street type, civic spaces).
5. It responds to key drivers including population growth, urban intensification, social equity, retail challenges of online shopping, climate change, and evolving community and business expectations for accessible, inclusive and high-quality activity centres.
6. The Framework will be implemented through a range of mechanisms, including planning scheme controls to guide private development outcomes, Council-led projects and public realm upgrades, and strategic partnerships.
7. Stage 1 community engagement (March–May 2025) informed preparation of the draft Framework.
8. Stage 2 engagement is proposed to refine and strengthen the Framework prior to final adoption and implementation.

Key Matters

9. The Framework establishes a place-based and principles-led approach, ensuring all public realm projects respond to local context while achieving consistent, high-quality yet financially sustainable outcomes.
10. It introduces a structured implementation and investment framework, including:
 - 10.1. A prioritisation framework based on community need, asset condition, deliverability and strategic alignment;
 - 10.2. An investment hierarchy (maintain, renew, upgrade, pilot and transform); and
 - 10.3. Coordinated delivery pathways across Council, development and partnerships.
11. The Framework responds to key issues identified through an audit of existing centres and Stage 1 engagement, including:
 - 11.1. Inconsistent and fragmented public realm outcomes;
 - 11.2. Ageing infrastructure and increasing maintenance costs;
 - 11.3. Limited tree canopy, greening and climate resilience;
 - 11.4. Gaps in safety, accessibility and active transport; and
 - 11.5. Opportunities to better reflect local identity and place character including Wadawurrung culture.
12. Design Standards will be developed to support the Framework and provide detailed technical specifications for materials, streetscape elements and delivery, ensuring consistency and quality across projects.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Draft Public Realm Framework (Attachment 1) for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
2. **Notes that a further report will be presented to Council following community consultation.**

Financial Sustainability

13. The Framework strengthens financial sustainability by:
 - 13.1. Introducing a prioritisation framework to direct investment to areas of greatest need and impact; and
 - 13.2. Promoting a whole of life approach to design, focusing on durability and maintainability.
14. Aligning capital works, renewal programs and developer contributions to achieve coordinated outcomes.

Community Engagement

15. The Framework has been informed by Stage 1 community engagement undertaken between March and May 2025, in coordination with the Open Space Strategy.
 - 15.1. Engagement activities included a dedicated Have Your Say page (3,295 views), online and hardcopy surveys (87 submissions), three face-to-face drop-in sessions across Greater Geelong (48 participants) and workshops with key stakeholders including the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Youth Council.
16. Targeted communications through social media, newsletters, print media and community networks.
17. Key themes identified through engagement included:
 - 17.1. Strong support for increased tree canopy, shade and urban greening.
 - 17.2. Safety, accessibility and universal design.
 - 17.3. More pedestrian-focused environments.
 - 17.4. Locally distinctive places reflecting identity.
 - 17.5. Recognition of Wadawurrung culture in the public realm.
18. Stage 2 engagement will include a four-week public exhibition period, with opportunities for community feedback through:
 - 18.1. Online survey and submissions;
 - 18.2. Drop-in sessions and pop-up engagement; and
 - 18.3. Targeted stakeholder engagement.
19. Feedback received will inform refinement of the final Framework prior to adoption.

Social Equity and Sustainability

- 20. The Framework promotes social equity by:
 - 20.1. Prioritising equitable access to quality public spaces across all activity centres;
 - 20.2. Addressing gaps in accessibility, amenity and investment;
 - 20.3. Embedding universal design principles;
 - 20.4. Supporting improved walkability, active transport and public transport access.
- 21. The Framework supports broader social outcomes by:
 - 21.1. Creating safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces;
 - 21.2. Supporting social interaction and community connection;
 - 21.3. Supporting local economies through active and vibrant centres; and
 - 21.4. Improved liveability and wellbeing across the municipality.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

- 22. A Gender+ Impact Assessment is currently underway and will be completed following Stage 2 community engagement.
 - 22.1. Initial findings have informed the Framework, particularly in relation to:
 - 22.2. Safety and perceptions of safety in public spaces;
 - 22.3. Inclusive and accessible design; and
 - 22.4. Provision for diverse activities and user groups.
- 23. Outcomes of the GIA will inform the final Framework.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

- 24. The Framework aligns with Council's legislative responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 25. The Framework aligns with key State and local policy frameworks, including:
 - 25.1. Council Plan 2025–2029.
 - 25.2. Clever and Creative Future (2017).
 - 25.3. Central Geelong Framework Plan (2023).
 - 25.4. Greater Geelong Planning Scheme
 - 25.5. Plan for Victoria (2025).
 - 25.6. Movement and Place Framework (2019).
 - 25.7. Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017).
- 26. The Framework will inform decision-making across:
 - 26.1. Capital works and asset renewal programs.
 - 26.2. Planning permit conditions.
 - 26.3. Strategic planning and infrastructure coordination.

27. There are no direct legal implications arising from endorsing the Framework for consultation.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

28. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priorities:
- Core and Critical Infrastructure
 - Economic Development
 - Healthy and Caring Community
 - Heritage and Culture
29. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
- A destination that attracts local and international visitors.
 - A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities.
 - An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.
 - Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.
 - People feel safe wherever they are.
 - Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

30. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

31. The Framework will help manage the risks associated with growth, increasing infrastructure demand and public realm investment.
32. Endorsing the Framework for community consultation will provide a strategic, evidence based approach to planning and investment, improve coordination, and prioritise investment in areas of greatest need.
33. The Framework aligns with Council's Balanced Asset Appetite by supporting a strategic, whole of life approach to asset planning and improving long term asset performance.
34. It aligns with Council's Cautious Financial Appetite by promoting prioritised and staged investment, efficient use of funds, and long-term financial sustainability, without committing Council to immediate capital expenditure.
35. The Framework supports Council's Balanced Community Appetite by improving accessibility, safety, inclusion, wellbeing and place based outcomes for the community.
36. It aligns with Council's Balanced Environment Appetite through increased urban greening, climate resilience and sustainable public realm design.

37. The Framework supports Balanced Operations and Service Delivery Appetite by introducing a consistent approach to project delivery and improving coordination across Council.
38. It aligns with Council's Cautious Governance Appetite by strengthening transparency, consistency and defensible decision making, while supporting compliance with legislation and policy.
39. Overall, the recommendation is considered within Council's risk appetite and tolerance levels, with the Framework reducing strategic risks and providing a coordinated approach to managing growth, infrastructure demand and long term asset performance.

Environmental Sustainability

40. The Framework embeds environmental sustainability through:
 - 40.1. Increasing tree canopy and urban greening.
 - 40.2. Integrating Water Sensitive Urban Design.
 - 40.3. Climate responsive and resilient design.
 - 40.4. Support for active transport.
41. It contributes to climate outcomes by:
 - 41.1. Reducing urban heat island effects.
 - 41.2. Enhancing biodiversity.
 - 41.3. Improving long-term environmental performance of assets.
 - 41.4. These outcomes support Council's broader climate and environmental objectives.

Attachments

1. Draft Public Realm Framework [2.3.1 - 27 pages]



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

DRAFT 2026

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	01
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We Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

1. INTRODUCTION

Across Greater Geelong, activity centres are where people come together to shop, work, and connect. Their streets and public spaces shape how people experience these places and support everyday life, local business, and a sense of identity. The quality of these spaces affects walkability, social interaction, and overall vibrancy.

As the population grows and more housing and jobs are added, these centres will become busier and more built up. This will increase pressure on streets and public spaces, but also create opportunities to improve them.

A 2026 public realm audit found clear opportunities for improvement. Some centres, particularly in newer growth areas, lack a strong local identity and do not reflect local heritage, landscape, or Wadawurrung culture. Ageing infrastructure, inconsistent materials, and incremental upgrades have contributed to visual clutter, reduced legibility, and higher maintenance costs. In many places, streets remain vehicle-dominated and do not effectively support walking, social interaction, or local activity.

Community feedback reinforces these findings. Residents consistently highlight the need for safer, more accessible environments, increased tree canopy and shade, improved maintenance, and places that better reflect local identity and culture. Without a coordinated approach, future growth risks reinforcing these issues.

In response, the Public Realm Framework sets out a targeted and coordinated approach to public realm investment in Greater Geelong's activity centres. It provides consistent guidance for Council projects, developer works, and partnerships to deliver place-responsive outcomes.

The Public Realm Framework aligns with key state and local strategies guiding growth, infrastructure, and community outcomes, ensuring public realm investment supports a connected, sustainable, and prosperous Geelong.

ALIGNMENT WITH KEY STRATEGIES AND PLANS

- *Paleert Tjaara Dja (Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan) 2020–2030*
- *Plan for Victoria 2025*
- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria 2.0 2026*
- *Movement and Place in Victoria 2.0 2026*
- *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*
- *Central Geelong Framework Plan 2023*
- *Council Plan 2025–2029*
- *Settlement Strategy 2020*
- *Retail Strategy 2020–2036*
- *Economic Development Strategy 2024–2034*
- *Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–2029*
- *Social Infrastructure Plan 2020–2023*
- *Arts and Cultural Strategy 2021–2031*
- *Outdoor Dining Guidelines 2025*
- *Climate Change Response Plan 2021–2030*
- *Geelong's Plan for Nature 2026–2036*
- *Open Space Strategy (draft 2026)*
- *Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Community (draft 2026)*
- *Public Art Strategy (under development)*
- *Municipal Road Management Plan 2025*
- *Road Management Act 2004 (Vic)*

2. GEELONG CONTEXT: GROWTH, STRUCTURE AND IDENTITY

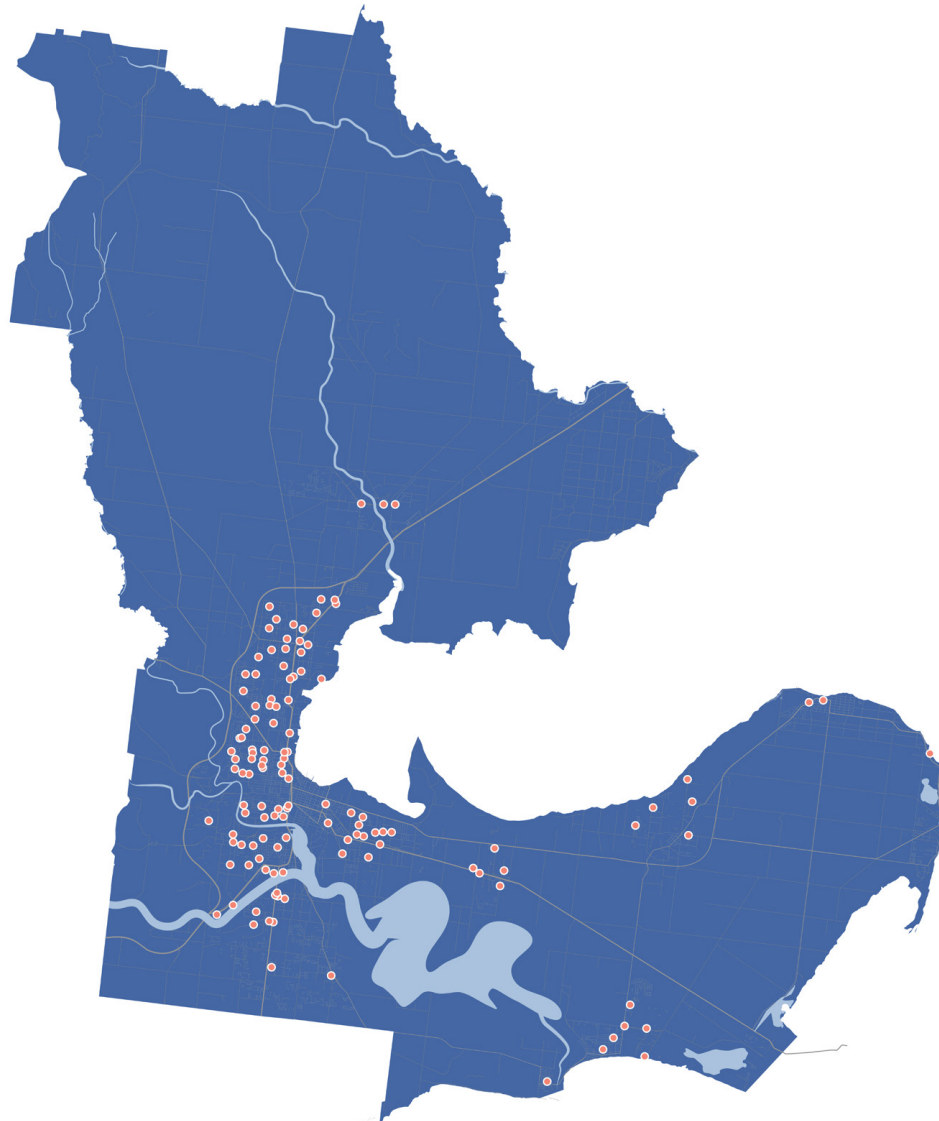


Figure 1. Greater Geelong's Municipal Area and Activity Centres

Greater Geelong is one of Australia's fastest growing regional cities. The population is forecast to increase from approximately 306,000 people in 2026 to more than 440,000 by 2046, placing significant pressure on housing, transport, services and public space.

This growth is occurring within a highly dispersed and centre-based urban structure. Geelong is not a single-centre city; it comprises a primary regional centre at Geelong, supported by a network of sub-regional, neighbourhood and local activity centres across established suburbs, growth areas and coastal townships. These centres play a critical role in providing access to jobs, services and community life.

Historically, public realm investment has been delivered across many locations on a project-by-project basis. As a result, the quality and performance of activity centres varies significantly across the municipality.

Activity centres are central to Geelong's economy, supporting more than 23,000 local businesses across a diverse range of industries. The performance of these centres is closely linked to the quality of their public realm, which influences foot traffic, dwell time, visitation and the overall attractiveness of places for business, investment and community use.

Geelong's identity is shaped by its landscape and history. The city sits on Wadawurrung Country, with enduring cultural connections to land, water and sky. Its coastal setting, the Bellarine Peninsula, the Barwon River corridor and surrounding open landscapes all contribute to a strong and varied sense of place. These elements are complemented by layers of industrial heritage, civic institutions and evolving suburban and township communities.

Across the municipality, there are clear examples of how public realm investment can reinforce local identity and support vibrant places. Coastal centres across the Bellarine Peninsula demonstrate strong relationships to landscape and environment. Geelong and surrounding inner urban areas reflect a more urban character shaped by heritage, civic functions and increasing levels of activity. Established suburban centres and township centres similarly demonstrate how targeted improvements to streets, civic spaces and community infrastructure can strengthen local identity and support everyday use.

These varied conditions highlight the need for a place-led approach that responds to the distinctive qualities of different centres while delivering consistent, high-quality outcomes across the network.

3. FRAMEWORK APPROACH

The framework builds on existing strategic and statutory planning frameworks, including the Greater Geelong Retail Strategy and the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. It recognises the role and function of each centre, while applying a place character lens to guide the design, renewal and management of the public realm.

1

Understand the Place Context and Character



Identify the centre's strategic role, planning context, local setting, scale, identity and character.

2

Apply the Design Principles



The design principles define how the street or space should function and the outcomes it should achieve.

3

Apply Place-Specific Design Directions



The place-specific design directions apply to specific public realm types (e.g. streets, laneways, civic plazas). They are supported by detailed design standards.



Together, centre role, place character areas, design principles and place-specific design directions form an integrated approach that ensures public realm projects respond to strategic priorities, local identity and community needs.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS FRAMEWORK

This framework is intended to guide consistent public realm outcomes across City and with delivery partners.

- **City staff:** Use the Framework to guide planning, design, capital works, asset renewal and maintenance, ensuring all public realm projects align with the objectives of this framework, including place and cultural outcomes.
- **Developers and major landholders:** Apply the framework when delivering development projects, ensuring public realm outcomes align with the expectations set out in this Framework.
- **Planning, design and technical professionals:** Use the Framework as a key reference when designing, assessing and delivering public realm outcomes across both City-led and development-led projects.
- **State government agencies and funding partners:** Use the Framework to align investment decisions and project delivery with City priorities.

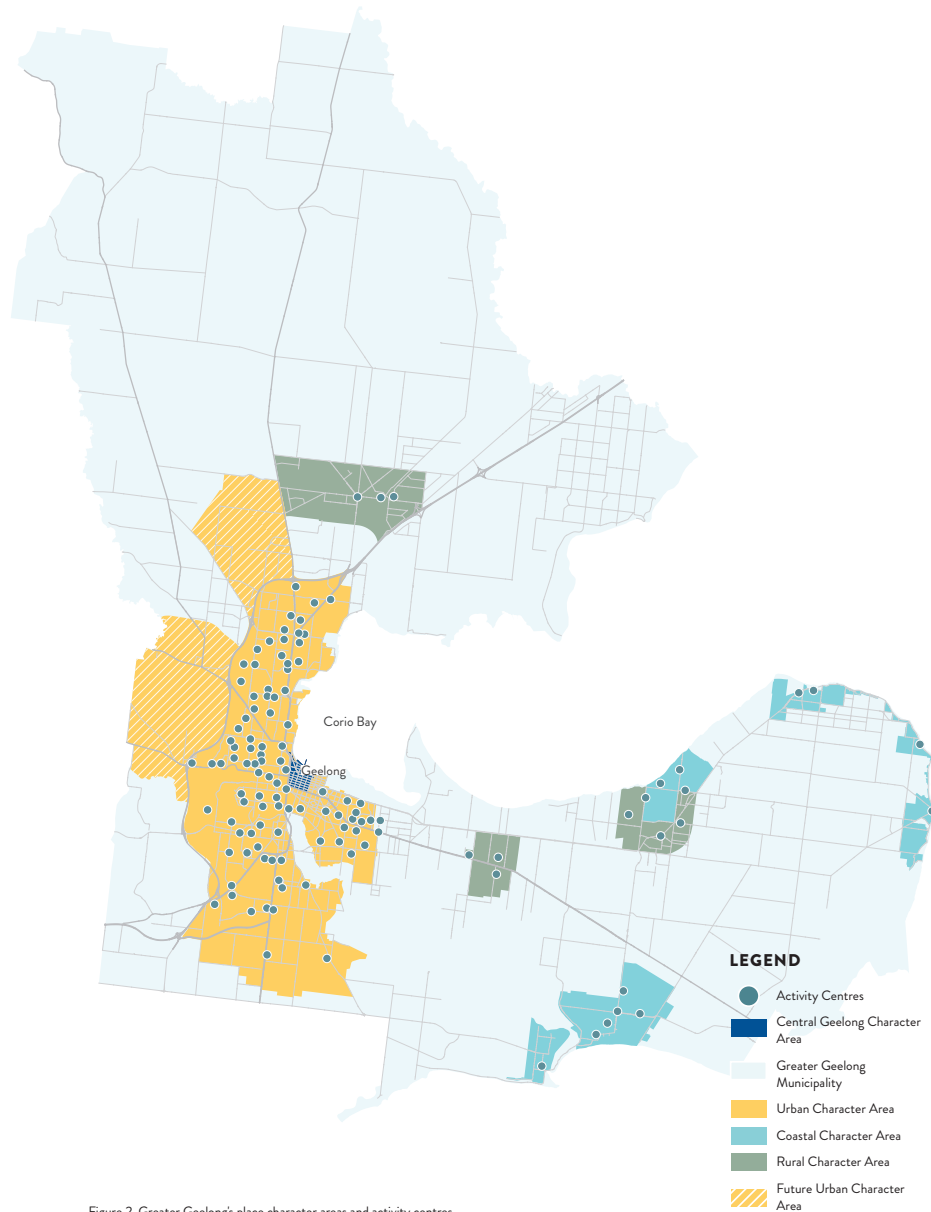


Figure 2. Greater Geelong's place character areas and activity centres

4. PLACE CHARACTER AREAS: OUR STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

Activity centres are defined through an established hierarchy and classification system that sets their role and function across Greater Geelong and provides the primary planning context for each centre.

Place Character Areas sit alongside this framework and define local identity, reflecting landscape, history, community values, and connections to Wadawurrung Country, and should be used to guide design response.

1. CENTRAL GEELONG



2. URBAN CENTRE



3. COASTAL CENTRE



4. RURAL CENTRE



Images: Place Character Area Examples

1. Cunningham St
2. High St, Belmont
3. Newcombe St, Portarlington
4. Wyndham St, Drysdale

CENTRAL GEELONG

FORMAL, STRUCTURED, CIVIC



Central Geelong is the historic civic and economic heart of the region, characterised by grand boulevards, fine-grain heritage streetscapes and a strong concentration of civic, cultural and commercial activity. Its identity is closely linked to its waterfront setting along Corio Bay.

CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

A formal, unified and highly legible civic environment. Streets should reinforce hierarchy, with strong building edges, active frontages and clearly defined civic spaces.

Key streets and corridors should maintain and strengthen visual and physical connections to the waterfront, reinforcing central Geelong's relationship with Corio Bay.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Refined, durable and high-quality materials applied consistently. Materials should reinforce civic character and clearly define key streets, nodes and movement corridors.

LANDSCAPE AND PLANTING

Structured and consistent planting should reinforce street geometry, civic order and Geelong's identity as the 'City of Trees'. Boulevard and avenue planting should define key streets and civic routes, particularly those connecting to the waterfront.

Planting should support diversity and resilience, using canopy trees and lower planting layers to establish a clear and recognisable streetscape.

Design should respond to historic street patterns, where east-west streets incorporate central planting to reinforce civic axes, and north-south streets use edge planting to support movement and maintain key view corridors, including towards the waterfront.

STREET FURNITURE AND ELEMENTS

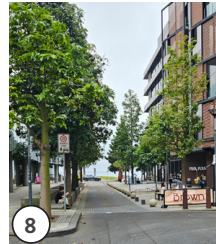
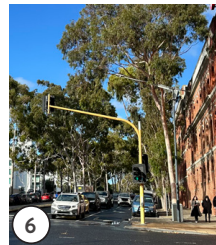
A coordinated and ordered furniture layout using a consistent civic palette. Placement should reinforce clear pedestrian movement and minimise clutter, with bespoke elements in key civic spaces.

HERITAGE AND CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

Integrated cultural and curated interpretation embedded within streets and public spaces, reflecting central Geelong today, its maritime, industrial, and civic history, and its connection to Corio Bay.



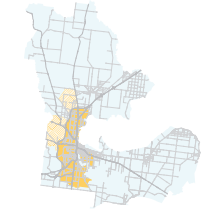
Images:
1. Lt Malop St
2. Bellerine St
3 & 4. Malop St



5. Moorabool St
6. Brougham St
7. Denny's Place
8. Cunningham St

URBAN CENTRES

ACTIVE, LOCAL, PEOPLE-FOCUSED



Urban centres include established and emerging neighbourhood hubs such as Geelong West, Newtown, Belmont, Armstrong Creek, Warrn Ponds and Lovely Banks.

In established centres, character is often shaped by existing built form, street patterns and local history. In newer and growth area centres, where built form may be more standardised or evolving, the public realm plays a key role in defining character, supporting identity and creating distinctive places.

Across all urban centres, the quality and design of streets, planting and public spaces are critical in shaping local identity and supporting vibrant, people-focused environments.

CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

Distinct and legible centres with a strong main street character. Active frontages, fine grain development and visible street life should be reinforced.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Simple, robust materials suited to high-use environments. A limited palette should define main pedestrian areas, with feature materials used to highlight crossings, corners and key gathering points.

LANDSCAPE AND PLANTING

Planting should prioritise pedestrian comfort, providing shade, seasonal variation and visual interest.

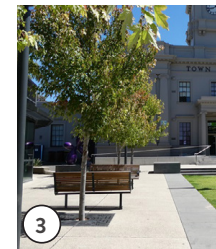
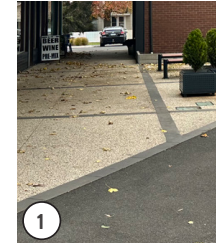
Tree species may vary between centres to create identity, while maintaining consistency within individual streets.

STREET FURNITURE AND ELEMENTS

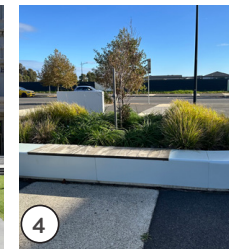
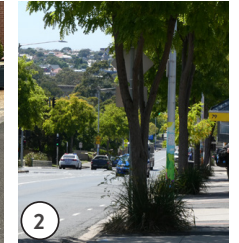
Furniture should be selected using the standard civic palette and arranged to support informal gathering while providing opportunities for rest.

HERITAGE AND CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

Interpretation that reflects local identity and neighbourhood history, integrated into key streets, civic spaces and activity nodes.



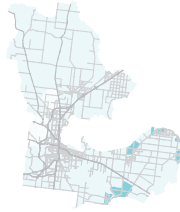
Images:
1. Ormond Road, Elwood
2. High Street, Belmont
3. Geelong West Town Hall Plaza
4. Armstrong Creek



5. High Street, Belmont
6. Labuan Square, Norlane
7. Ballarat Street, Yarraville
8. M40 Cycle Path

COASTAL CENTRES

RELAXED, OPEN AND CONNECTED TO THE COAST



Coastal centres include townships along the Bellarine Peninsula such as St Leonards, Portarlington, Barwon Heads, Ocean Grove and Clifton Springs. These centres are defined by their proximity to the water, relaxed coastal character, maritime heritage and seasonal tourism.

CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

A relaxed, open and informal coastal environment with strong visual and physical connections to the water. Streets should avoid overly formal or urbanised treatments.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Light-toned, durable materials suited to coastal conditions, including sun exposure, salt and wind. Materials should weather naturally and reinforce the coastal setting.

Footpaths should be generous to accommodate seasonal peaks and active frontages.

LANDSCAPE AND PLANTING

Planting should reflect coastal environments, including dune, saltmarsh and foreshore landscapes. Species selection should respond to wind, salt exposure and sandy soils.

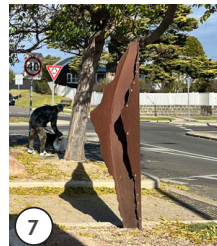
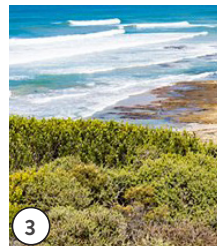
Design should maintain view corridors and reinforce a sense of openness, rather than density or enclosure.

STREET FURNITURE AND ELEMENTS

Durable, low-maintenance elements suitable for coastal conditions. Seating and gathering spaces should be informal, flexible and oriented to views and movement toward the foreshore.

HERITAGE AND CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

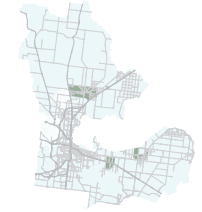
Interpretation celebrating maritime, coastal and community cultural life. Wayfinding should clearly reinforce connections to the foreshore and key destinations.



Images:
1 & 2. Ocean Grove
3, 4 & 5. Barwon Heads
6, 7 & 8. St Leonards

RURAL CENTRES

SPACIOUS, SIMPLE, LANDSCAPE-LED



Rural centres include the township hubs of Lara, Leopold and Drysdale, located within the Western Plains and Bellarine hinterland. These centres are shaped by their surrounding rural landscapes, with a character defined by openness, spaciousness, vegetation and strong community identity, while continuing to accommodate growth and change.

CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

A low-scale, informal township character that maintains strong visual and physical connections to surrounding rural landscapes. Streets should retain openness and avoid continuous hard urban edges.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Simple, durable and locally responsive materials applied in a restrained manner. Paving should be limited in extent, with opportunities for informal or softer surfaces where appropriate.

Materials and colours may draw from local rural and agricultural context.

LANDSCAPE AND PLANTING

Planting should reflect local grassland and woodland landscapes, with emphasis on openness, spacing and climate resilience.

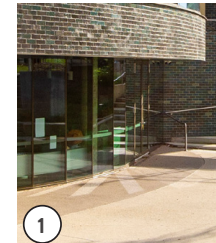
Species selection should prioritise locally appropriate vegetation, and reinforce existing landscape patterns rather than introduce highly structured planting.

STREET FURNITURE AND ELEMENTS

Minimal and functional elements applied sparingly. Furniture should be concentrated at key gathering points, avoiding over-provision and visual clutter.

HERITAGE AND CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

Interpretation reflecting agricultural history, landscape character, local industries, and creative connections, expressed in a simple and understated way.



Images:
1, 2 & 3. Drysdale, Borongook Library and Wyndham St
4. Royal Park native/ indigenous grassland meadow
5. Estes Park, Colorado

5. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design principles set out a clear and consistent approach for planning, designing and delivering public spaces across Greater Geelong's activity centres. Each principle outlines what we want to achieve through objectives and how this can be achieved through design directions. They apply to all public realm types (refer chapter 6) and guide all projects, supporting high-quality outcomes that reflect place character across central, urban, coastal and rural centres.



PRINCIPLE 1: AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

Public realm will reflect and strengthen the unique identity and character of each place

OBJECTIVES

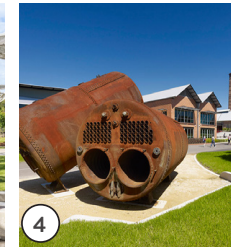
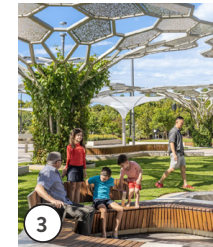
- Reflect Place Character Areas across central, urban, coastal and rural centres.
- Embed recognition of Wadawurrung Country through engagement and cultural expression.
- Express local landscape, history and community identity through design.

DESIGN DIRECTIONS

- Respond to local context, including landscape, history and community values.
- Design reflects Wadawurrung engagement or a co-design process, where this has been undertaken.
- Integrate public art and interpretation into streets and spaces to create a more authentic and distinctive sense of place.
- Coordinate materials, planting and furniture to express local identity.
- Reinforce identity at key gateways and civic nodes.

Images:

1. Quay Quarter Lanes, Sydney
2. Denny's Place breakthrough, Central Geelong
3. Festival Plaza, Adelaide
4. University of Western Sydney
5. Prince of Wales Hospital
6. Hitchcock Ave, Barwon Heads





PRINCIPLE 2: ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

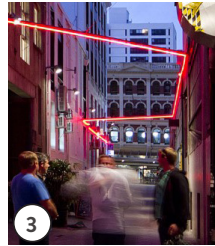
Public realm will support everyday activity, social interaction and a lively, welcoming public life.

OBJECTIVES

- Create inviting and comfortable public spaces that support gathering and lingering.
- Support active frontages, outdoor dining and activation.
- Enhance vibrancy and safety during day and night.

DESIGN DIRECTIONS

- Provide frequent seating in visible locations along desire lines.
- Ensure access to shade, shelter and weather protection.
- Support active frontages and minimise conflicts with servicing and vehicle crossovers.
- Integrate lighting for both safety and place activation.
- Enable flexible use for events, outdoor dining and temporary activation.
- Incorporate public art, interpretation and interactive elements to enrich experience.



Images:
1. Beach Road, Christie's Beach, South Australia
2. Lt Malop Street, Central Geelong
3. Randwick Eyclight Lane Auckland
4. Nemarket, Randwick
5. Magill Village, Adelaide
6. Gordon St, London



PRINCIPLE 3: SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

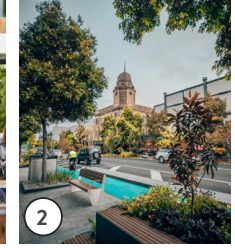
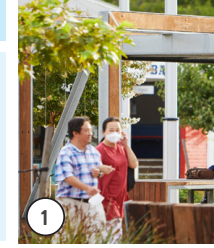
Public realm will prioritise safe, inclusive and legible movement, while also supporting comfortable, welcoming and well-connected places for people to gather, pause and interact.

OBJECTIVES

- Create a safe, legible and universally accessible public realm.
- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport over private vehicles.
- Create well connected and continuous movement network.

DESIGN DIRECTIONS

- Provide continuous, accessible paths of travel for all users.
- Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement through street design.
- Improve crossings, visibility and passive surveillance using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Reduce traffic speeds and support low-speed environments.
- Integrate wayfinding along key routes and desire lines.
- Remove barriers, reduce clutter and improve accessibility of footpaths.
- Provide direct connections between key destinations and transport nodes.



Images:
1 & 2. Magill Village, Adelaide
3. Malop St, Geelong
4. Flinders Parade, Brisbane
5. Lonsdale Street, Dandenong
6. Beverley, Western Australia

PRINCIPLE 4: GREEN AND RESILIENT

Nature and climate-responsive design will be embedded to support resilience, biodiversity and wellbeing.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase tree canopy, shade and greenery in public spaces.
- Support biodiversity and ecological function.
- Improve climate resilience and urban cooling.

DESIGN DIRECTIONS

- Integrate tree canopy and landscaping to provide shade and cooling.
- Apply Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) to manage stormwater and support irrigation.
- Use diverse, climate-appropriate and locally responsive planting.
- Provide deep soil zones, permeability and passive irrigation for planting.
- Align greening with walking and cycling routes to create cooler movement corridors.
- Incorporate sustainable and low-carbon materials where appropriate.



Images:
1. Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Wyndham Vale
2. Bakery Hill, Ballarat
3. Sherbrook Reserve, Ringwood
4. Malop St, Central Geelong
5. Brougham St, Central Geelong
6. The Rocks Sydney

PRINCIPLE 5: SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

Public realm will be practical, coordinated and designed for long-term performance.

OBJECTIVES

- Deliver cost-effective and maintainable public realm outcomes.
- Integrate public realm planning and design early in development and infrastructure projects.
- Ensure coordinated, consistent and efficient delivery across the municipality.
- Support adaptable public spaces that can respond to future change.

DESIGN DIRECTIONS

- Consider whole-of-life cost, durability and maintenance requirements in design decisions.
- Apply consistent palettes, materials and public realm standards across projects.
- Prioritise durable, low-maintenance and locally sourced materials where appropriate.
- Design adaptable and flexible spaces that can accommodate changing uses and needs.
- Coordinate utilities and infrastructure to reduce visual clutter and improve amenity.
- Integrate public realm requirements early within planning, servicing and infrastructure coordination processes.

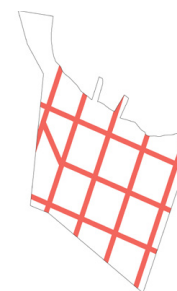


Images:
1. Darling Harbour, Sydney
2. Randwick, Sydney
3. Winnipeg, Manitoba
4. Beverley, Western Australia

6. PLACE-SPECIFIC DESIGN DIRECTIONS

The place-specific design directions guide the design and development of specific public realm types in Central or Greater Geelong. In central Geelong, these are structured as a series of plans addressing key typologies, big streets, little streets, laneways and arcades, and civic spaces, each responding to different movement patterns, levels of activity and public life functions.

CENTRAL GEELONG



BIG STREETS
PG 20-23



LITTLE STREETS
PG 24-25



LANEWAYS AND ARCADES
PG 26-27



CIVIC SPACES
PG 28-29

CENTRAL GEELONG: BIG STREETS

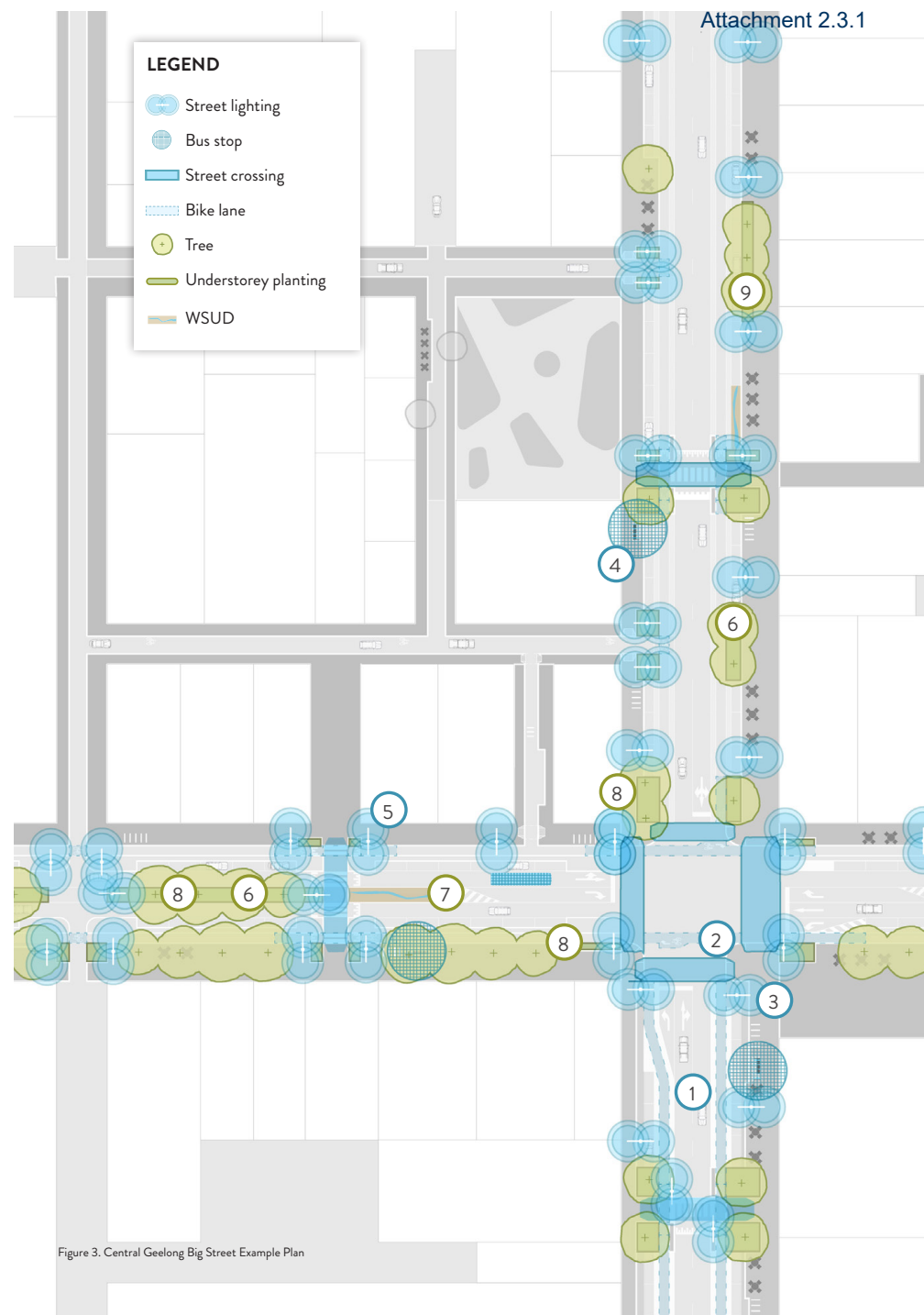
SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Big streets should be designed to provide priorities to different transport modes according to their relationships to land uses and Waterfront, and to their formal role in the structure of the city.
- 2 Big streets should provide dedicated, separated bicycle lanes and integrated infrastructure on streets identified as strategic cycling corridors and encourage the provision of bicycle lanes on other big streets.
- 3 Big streets that provide primary and secondary pedestrian links (refer to *Central Geelong Framework* Figure 12) should prioritise pedestrian movement and accessibility with consideration for footpath width, surface quality, slower speed limits, frequency of crossing points at intersections and mid-blocks, and improved lighting.
- 4 Big streets that provide primary and secondary pedestrian links or strategic cycling corridors should incorporate intuitive wayfinding and signage through the streetscape that supports ease of navigation for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5 Big streets should have lighting design that is layered and balances different transport mode needs and is integrated with smart controls.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

Big streets should support increased tree canopy and reinforce Geelong as the 'City of trees' while promoting distinct character and species diversity between streets. Streets should be assigned with a primary and secondary street tree species to define street character and encourage diversity.

- 6
 - On East-West big streets - Tree planting should be promoted in the central medians and footpaths.
 - On North-South big streets - Tree planting should be promoted in the side of streets and footpaths. Tree planting should be discouraged from the central median.
 - Streets identified as Green Spine streets are exempt from these parameters.
- 7 Big streets should incorporate WSUD into the streetscape where possible, including rain gardens at low points within the topography, permeable surfaces in centre medians and tree-pits for water collection, filtration, and passive irrigation.
- 8 Big streets should incorporate increased understorey planting through the creation of garden beds in kerb out-stands and medians if there is room in the footpath.
- 9 All developments and infrastructure works adjacent to big streets should undertake services and utility coordination to allow adequate space for street tree root zones.
- 10 The design of big streets should consider mitigation of urban heat and flooding impacts through the use of high-albedo paving materials, permeable surfaces, and detention tanks and pipes.
- 11 The design of big streets should incorporate wind mitigation strategies to reduce wind tunnelling and enhance pedestrian comfort, including street trees, layered planting, and appropriately scaled street furniture.



CENTRAL GEELONG: BIG STREETS

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

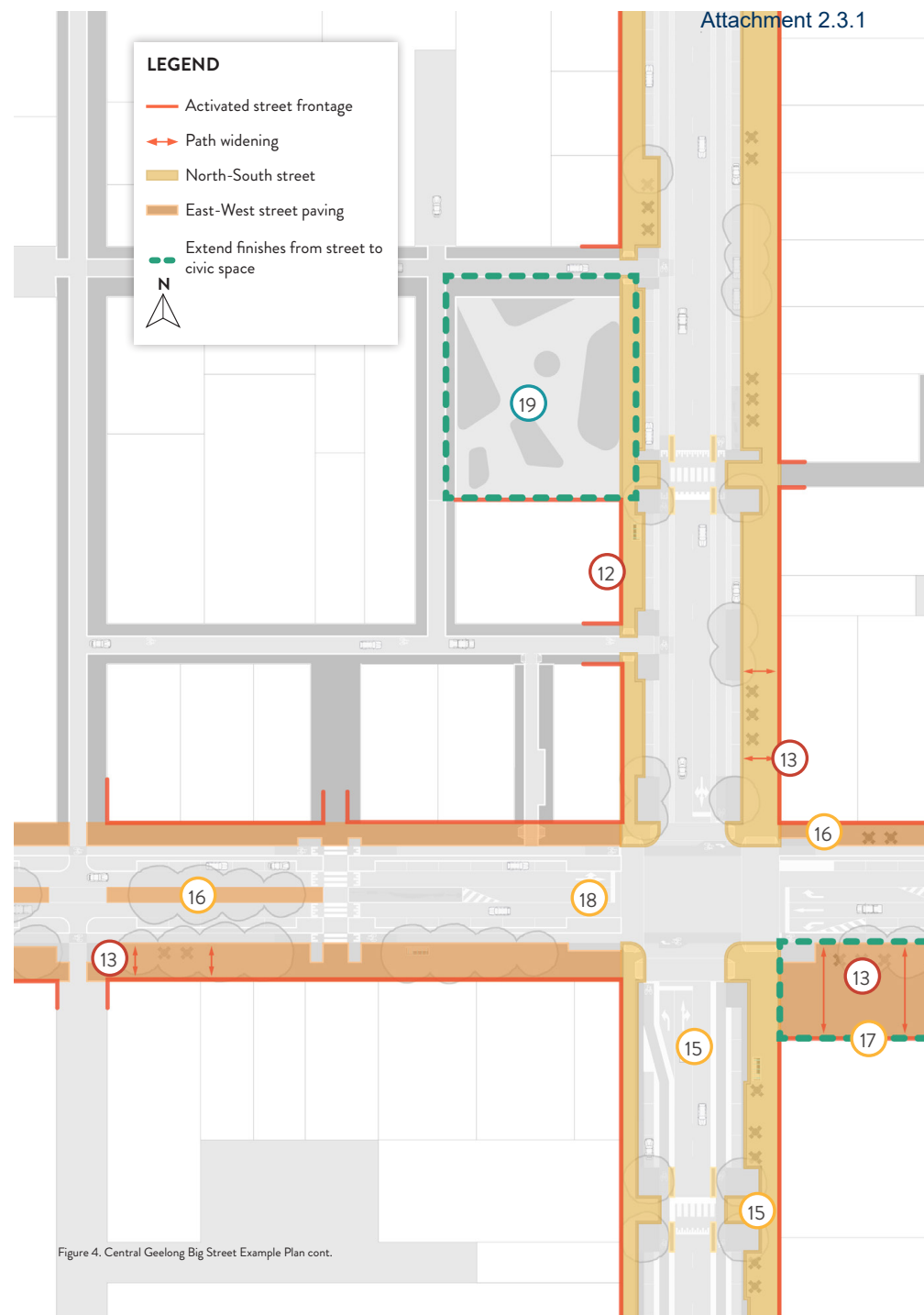
- 12 Ground-level frontages should be activated on all big streets by minimising the number of driveways and encouraging active, engaging ground-floor spaces.
- 13 Big Streets should promote the widening of footpaths to support safe movement and outdoor dining uses where possible.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 14 Big Streets in central Geelong should incorporate Wadawurrung language and design through integrated interpretation, signage, and public art, guided by Wadawurrung where appropriate.
- 15 North-South oriented big streets such as Yarra and Gheringhap Streets should adopt a unified character that promotes their physical and visual connection to Corio Bay. This may be achieved through lighter-toned materials and furniture that references Geelong's industrial and maritime heritage.
- 16 Where streets offer significant visual connections such as views to Corio Bay, prioritise the protection of these sight-lines. Elements like central median tree planting and light pole mast arms should be avoided.
- 16 East-West oriented big streets such as Ryrie Street, Myers Street and the eastern portion of Malop Street should adopt a unified character that focuses on their urban and civic context. This may be achieved through materials and consistent furniture styles. Elements such as tree planting, car parking and light pole masts may be incorporated into the centre median of the street to support safety, accessibility, and urban amenity.
- 16 Darker toned materials and furniture should be limited to the existing Civic Spine areas along Malop Street and part of Little Malop Street.
- 17 Designs of big streets should consider land use relationships and precincts. (See *Central Geelong Framework Plan* Figure 15)

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 19 Upgrades of big streets should consider the use of higher quality materials sparingly and for key details to help lift the areas aesthetic and long term function while balancing cost.



CENTRAL GEELONG: LITTLE STREETS

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND CONNECTED

- 1 Little streets should be designed for local access, and a shared roadway with bicycle riders. This should be achieved by restricting through-traffic.
- 2 Little streets should transition to shared and pedestrian zones where appropriate. These zones should allow for increased pedestrian amenity while allowing for controlled vehicle / servicing access.
- 3 Little streets should target reduced traffic speed limits (to 20-30 km/h) where they do not transition to shared zones. Narrower vehicle lanes and tighter turns may be used where appropriate to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- 4 Design lighting on little streets to provide consistent, warm illumination with a focus on junctions and crossings.
- 5 Little streets should support continuous footpath travel at intersections.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 6 Little streets should support increased tree canopy while promoting distinct character and species diversity between streets. Streets should be assigned with a primary and secondary street tree species to define street character and encourage diversity.
- 7 Where space is constrained, little street design should consider the use of integrated modular planters, and vertical greening structures to provide shade and amenity.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

- 8 Little streets can be hubs of intense retail experiences and should allow for that use over time with the set-out of the street.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 9 Little streets should adopt a unified character that promotes their role as places of intimate human-scale experience and flexibility. They should have a consistent treatment for shared and pedestrian focused little streets that supports flexibility and activation.
- 10 Consider the use of finer details and materials such as stone, brick, timber to show the character of place and create a rich sensory experience.
- At key intersections, street hierarchy should be respected with big street character taking priority over little street character.

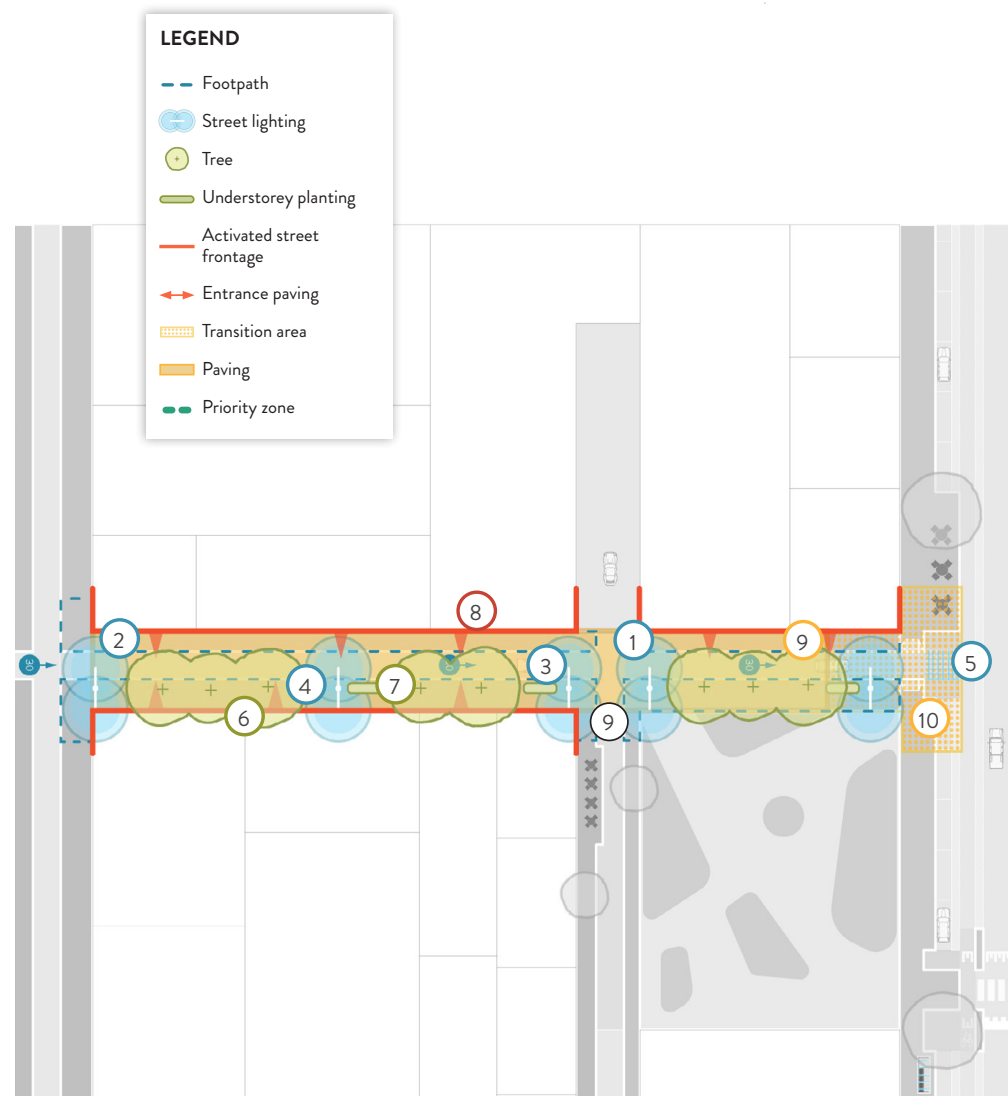


Figure 5. Central Geelong Little Street Example Plan

CENTRAL GEELONG: LANEWAYS & ARCADES

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Laneways should support shared and pedestrian zones where appropriate. These zones should allow for increased pedestrian amenity while allowing for controlled vehicle / servicing access.
- 2 Laneways that do not transition to shared zones should support reduced traffic speed limits (to 30 km/h) or introduce traffic calming to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- 3 Where laneways transition to pedestrian-only zones, consider appropriate measures to improve pedestrian safety. This may include retractable bollards, planter boxes, or other barriers, depending on site conditions or operational needs.
- 4 For laneways servicing businesses and residences, ensure design accommodates loading, waste collection, and utilities.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 5 Laneways should contribute to urban greening and climate resilience through tree and understorey planting. Where space is constrained consider integration of modular planters and vertical greening structures.
- 6 Laneways should coordinate tree and light pole placement to avoid conflicts and ensure solar access is not compromised.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

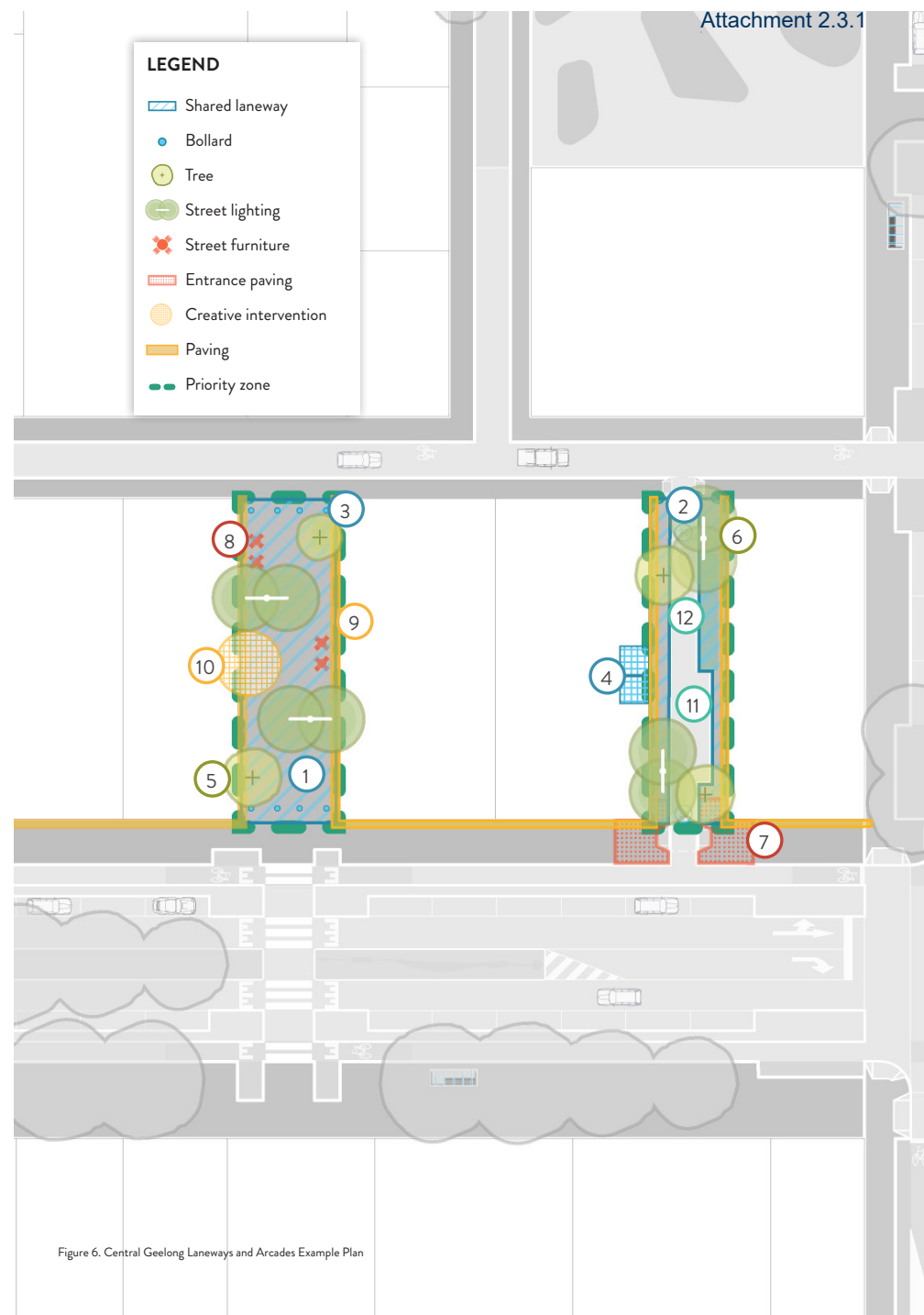
- 7 Laneways should provide pedestrian permeability and interest in the street network that invites people to linger and explore.
- 8 Laneways should support small scale activation such as pop-up events, outdoor dining or micro-retail.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 9 Laneways should celebrate their unique context, character and history. Where appropriate, their design should borrow materials and finishes from the primary street network palette to create visual continuity.
- 10 The design of laneways should encourage creative interventions such as murals, lighting or bespoke signage to express local identity and create a sense of discovery.

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 11 Laneway design should use durable and maintainable materials that are compatible with the adjacent street context and easy to replace over time.
- 12 Laneways should prioritise grouping of services and furniture in dedicated locations to reduce street clutter and maximise public space.



CENTRAL GEELONG: CIVIC SPACES

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Civic spaces should contain footpaths that are designed to be universally accessible.
- 2 Civic spaces footpath networks should be designed to link seamlessly into surrounding streets, civic buildings and access ways.
- 3 Civic spaces should support cycling access with integration of bicycle parking.
- 4 The design of civic spaces should be coordinated to provide well-placed seating, shade, shelter, and amenities that enable use throughout the seasons, by people of all abilities.
- 5 Clear views from surrounding streets and buildings should be maintained into civic spaces to enhance passive safety and visibility.
- 6 Buildings facing or adjoining civic spaces should be designed with active ground floor uses and transparent façades to increase passive surveillance and a sense of security.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 7 Civic spaces should support increased tree canopy while promoting distinct character and species diversity between streets and spaces.
- 8 Civic spaces should incorporate WSUD where possible, including rain gardens, swales, and passive irrigation of gardens and trees.
- 9 Civic Spaces should include garden beds and understorey planting with preference for native/ indigenous shrubs, grasses and understorey plant palettes.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

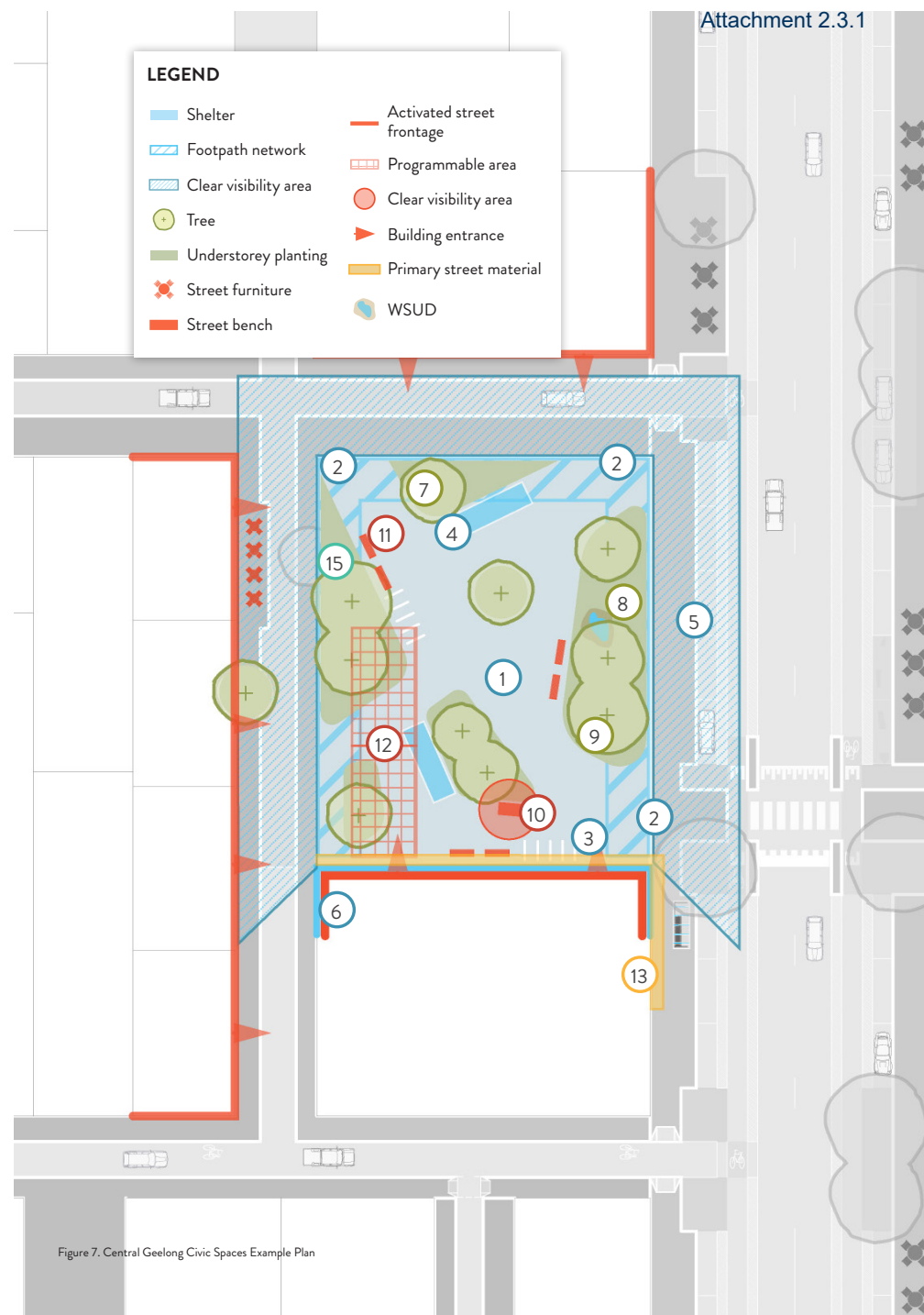
- 10 Design civic spaces with infrastructure (power, water, handstand areas) to support temporary uses and activation such as art installations, food trucks, and seasonal events.
- 11 Appropriately locate park furniture in areas that are highly visible and close to or adjoining pedestrian desire lines / gathering spaces.
- 12 Design civic spaces to be used in different ways at different times, supporting both programmed events and spontaneous activity.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 13 Civic spaces must reflect and enhance the unique character, history, and identity of their place. The design should consider use of local materials and finishes, and where appropriate, materials and finishes from the primary street network palette to create visual continuity.
- 14 Civic spaces may provide opportunities to reflect Wadawurrung Country and culture through design. The nature of these opportunities, and Wadawurrung involvement in the process, will be determined in consultation with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

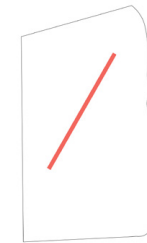
SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 15 Civic spaces should incorporate water-wise landscaping with native/ indigenous and low-maintenance plant species.

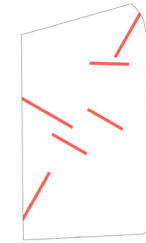


GREATER GEELONG

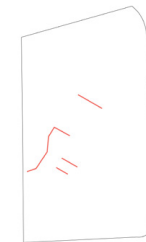
In Greater Geelong, the place-specific plans address a different set of public realm typologies, core streets, transition streets, laneways and arcades, and civic spaces, each responding to varying levels of activity, movement and place function across centres and neighbourhoods.



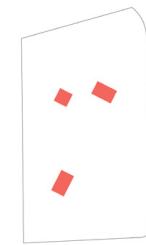
CORE STREETS
PG 32-35



TRANSITION STREETS
PG 36-37



LANEWAYS AND ARCADES
PG 38-39



CIVIC SPACES
PG 40-41



GREATER GEELONG: CORE STREETS

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Core streets should provide high walkability with wide footpaths, pedestrian priority crossings and legible connections to surrounding neighbourhoods.
 - 2 Core streets should provide high cycling amenity, with the integration of cycling routes, bicycle parking, and integration with public transport and connections.
 - 3 Public transport should be integrated into the design of core streets with bus stops that are visually clear and provide universal access.
 - 4 Core street lighting design should support the retail, social and night time economic activities by providing warm lighting that is integrated with retail shop-fronts.
 - 5 Core street footpaths should be sized comparable to increased activity around shops. They should provide for access, passive areas, and amenity including trees and planting.
- Planning for carparking in core streets should prioritise flexibility and adaptability. This will allow streets to be reconfigured as transport mode shares change.
- 6 Parking for core streets is typically limited so parking alternatives need to be planned for as needed and as part of the whole activity centre.
 - 7 Support continuous footpath travel at intersections through supporting infrastructure

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 8 Core streets should support tree canopy diversity while promoting the distinct character of activity centres through species selection. Core streets should consider 1-3 key tree species that support streetscape character and provide shade amenity.
- 9 The design of core streets should prioritise increased understorey planting through greening of kerb out-stands, side medians and footpaths where appropriate
- 10 Core streets should support WSUD applications where possible.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

- 11 The design of core streets should support the activation of footpaths by providing space for retail, dining, and other temporary or pop-up activities.
- 12 Core streets should provide frequent seating nodes in highly visible locations, close to pedestrian desire lines, kerb out-stands and gathering spaces. Ensure they are functional, attractive, and comfortable

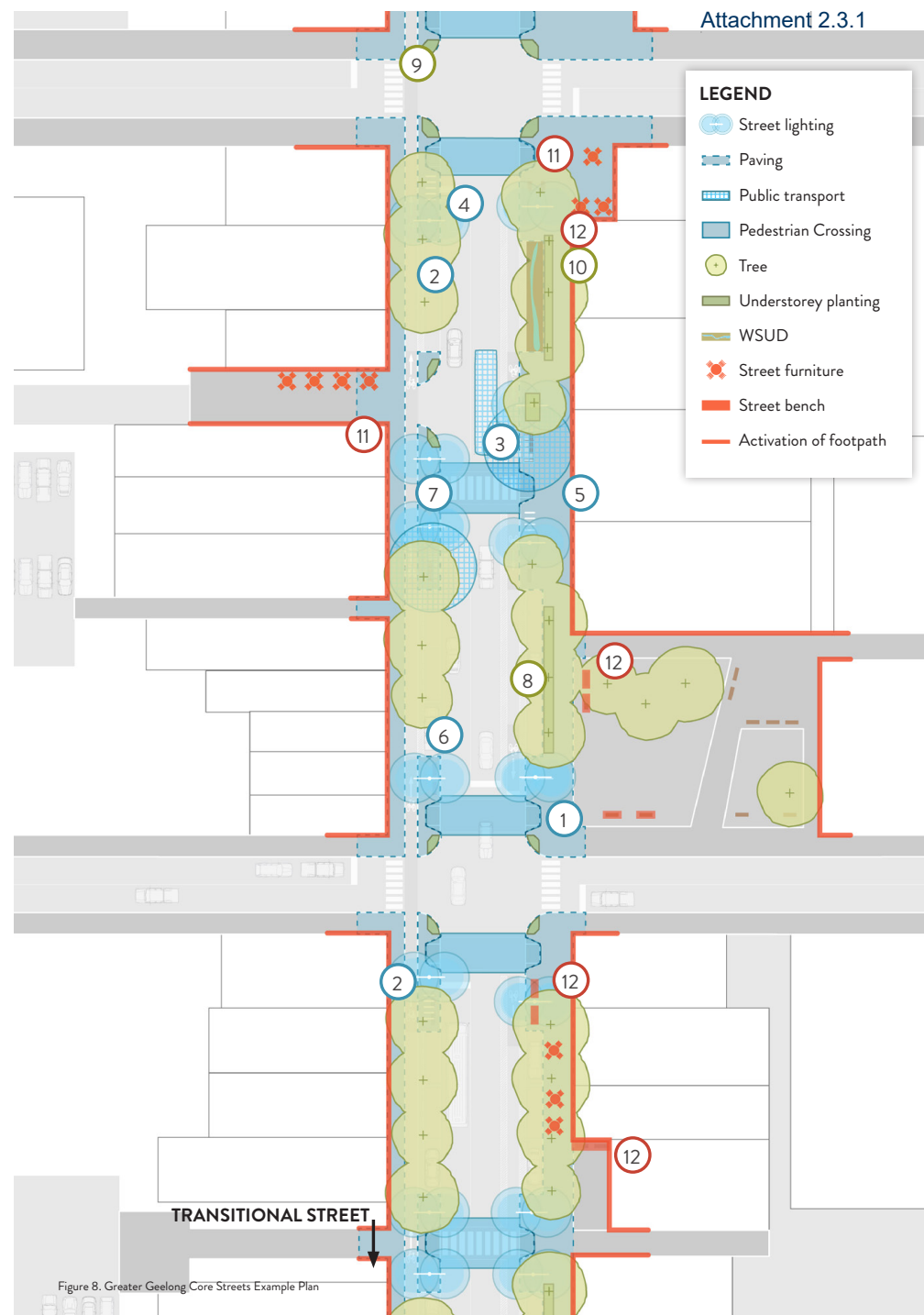


Figure 8. Greater Geelong Core Streets Example Plan

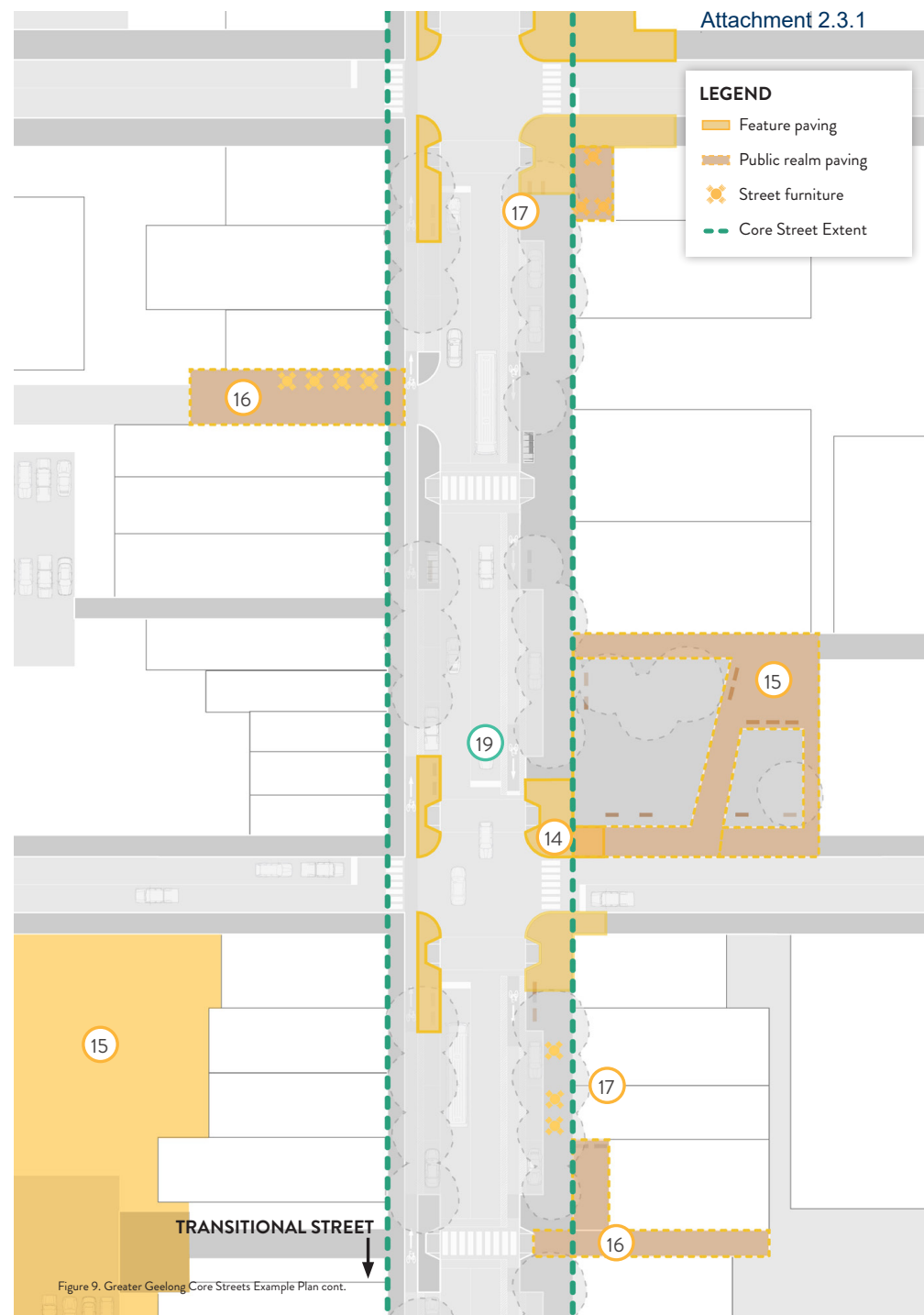
GREATER GEELONG: CORE STREETS

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 13 Core streets should express a distinct and authentic identity that reflects their role in the urban fabric. This should be informed by the identified place character (urban, coastal, rural) and be expressed through the considered use of materials, finishes, public art, and interpretation.
- 14 Core streets should employ a simple and refined material palette, including feature paving treatment that visually distinguishes the activity centre from streets outside the activity centre.
- 15 Where civic spaces occur, ensure the public realm finishes and design are sympathetic to the core street character.
- 16 Where private or public laneways and arcades adjoin the core street, consider the extension of core street feature paving to create visual cohesion.
- 17 Provide frequent seating nodes in highly visible locations, close to pedestrian desire lines, kerb outstands and gathering spaces. Ensure they are functional, attractive, and comfortable
- 18 Support outdoor dining in the footpath or kerbside (where space is constrained) to enhance the pedestrian experience and support local economy.

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 19 The extent of the core street material and paving treatments should be assessed case-by-case. It may be determined based on the extent of the activity centre zoning, masterplans, and current or future development.



GREATER GEELONG: TRANSITION STREETS

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Transition streets should provide safe and legible pedestrian and cycling connections between residential areas and local activity centres and key services or community facilities.
- 2 As Transition Streets approach the core street in activity centres, street design should consider the use of traffic calming measures including lane narrowing, tree planting, and raised crossings.
- 3 Illumination should be prioritised along key night-time pedestrian routes as well as public transport stops and crossings.
- 4 As infill development occurs, encourage the improvement of interfacing public realm streets and spaces through uplift and design that prioritises human-scale.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 5 Tree planting selection for transition streets should where possible, extend or "announce" the core street canopy. Select tree species that are similar or visually compatible with the core street species.
- 6 The design of transition streets should look for opportunities to contribute to a greener, cooler, and more climate-resilient City through the prioritisation of garden beds that include base and middle layers of planting, water sensitive urban design systems and integration of tree planting.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

- 7 Transition streets should clearly signal the approach to core streets and provide a sense of arrival and transition through material selection, furniture and finishes that reference selective elements of the core street palette and character.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 8 Transition streets should incorporate gateway elements such as distinctive signage, public art and feature planting at key entry points to the core street, that reflects the areas heritage, character and creativity.

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 9 Transition streets should be sustainable, efficient and feasible to deliver. They should feature durable, maintainable materials that are compatible with and borrow from the core street design at key locations such as street corners and crossings.
- 10 As infill development occurs encourage the improvement of interfacing streets and spaces through improved finishes, landscaping, consistent street furniture, and improvement of streetscape character.

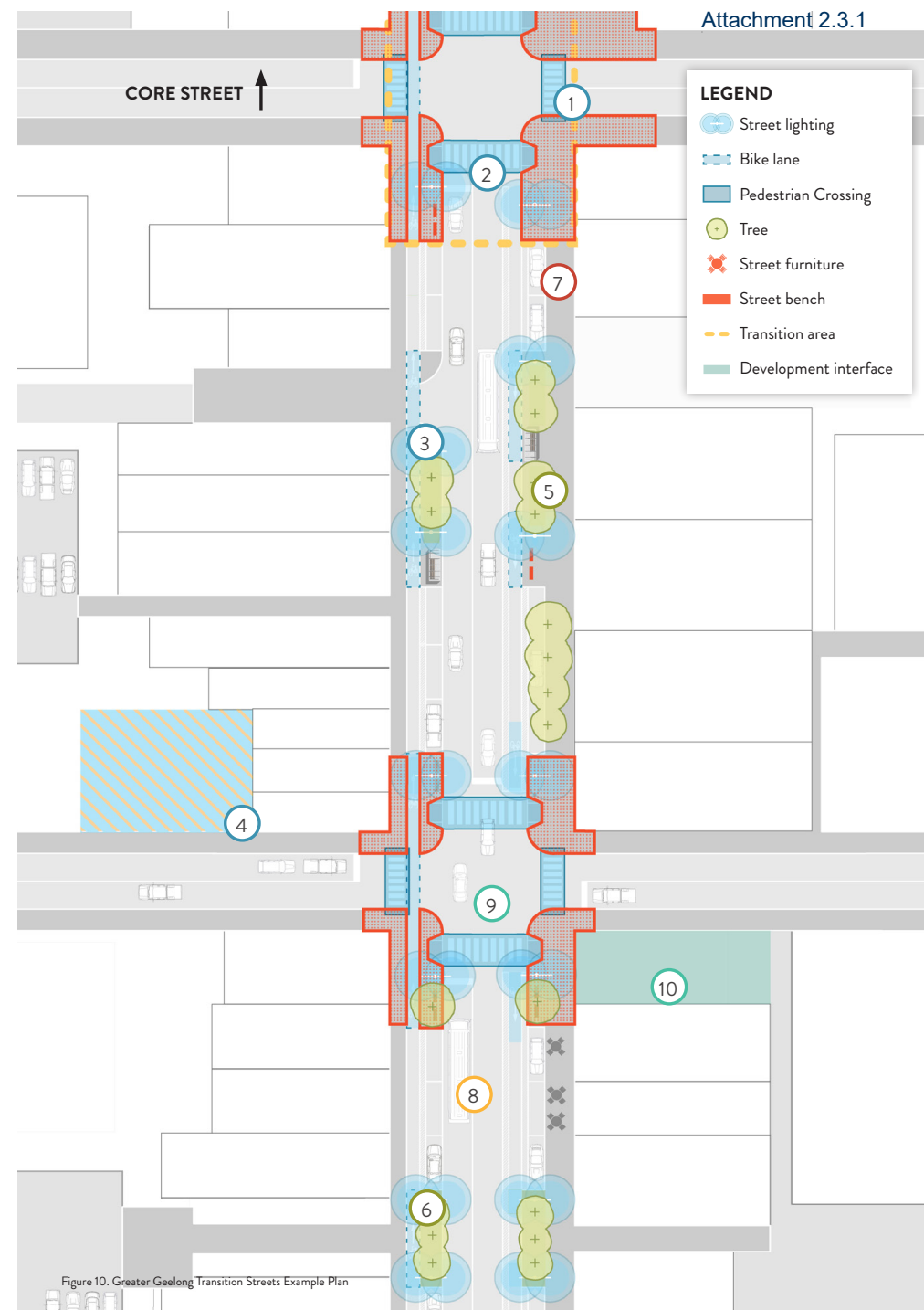


Figure 10. Greater Geelong Transition Streets Example Plan

GREATER GEELONG: LANEWAYS + ARCADES

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Laneways should support shared and pedestrian zones where appropriate. These zones should allow for increased pedestrian amenity while allowing for controlled vehicle / servicing access.
- 2 Laneways that do not transition to shared zones should support reduced traffic speed limits (to 30 km/h) or introduce traffic calming to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- 3 Where laneways transition to pedestrian-only zones consider infrastructure to improve pedestrian safety, like retractable bollards, planter boxes and barriers to improve pedestrian safety.
- 4 For laneways servicing businesses and residences, ensure design accommodates loading, waste collection. Utility boxes and bins should be rationally located, to avoid clutter and barriers.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 5 Laneways should contribute to urban greening and climate resilience through tree and understorey planting. Where space is constrained consider integration of modular planters and vertical greening structures.
- 6 Laneways should coordinate tree and light pole placement to avoid conflicts and ensure solar access is not compromised.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

- 7 Laneways should provide fine-grained access and interest in the street network that invites people to linger and explore.
- 8 Laneways should support small scale activation such as pop-up events, outdoor dining or micro-retail.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 9 Laneways should celebrate their unique context, character and history. Where appropriate, their design should borrow materials and finishes from the primary street network palette to create visual and physical continuity.
- 10 The design of laneways should encourage creative interventions such as murals, lighting or bespoke signage to express local identity and create a sense of discovery.

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 11 Laneway design should use durable and maintainable materials that are compatible with the adjacent street context and easy to replace over time.
- 12 Laneways should prioritise grouping of services and furniture in dedicated locations to reduce street clutter and maximise public space.

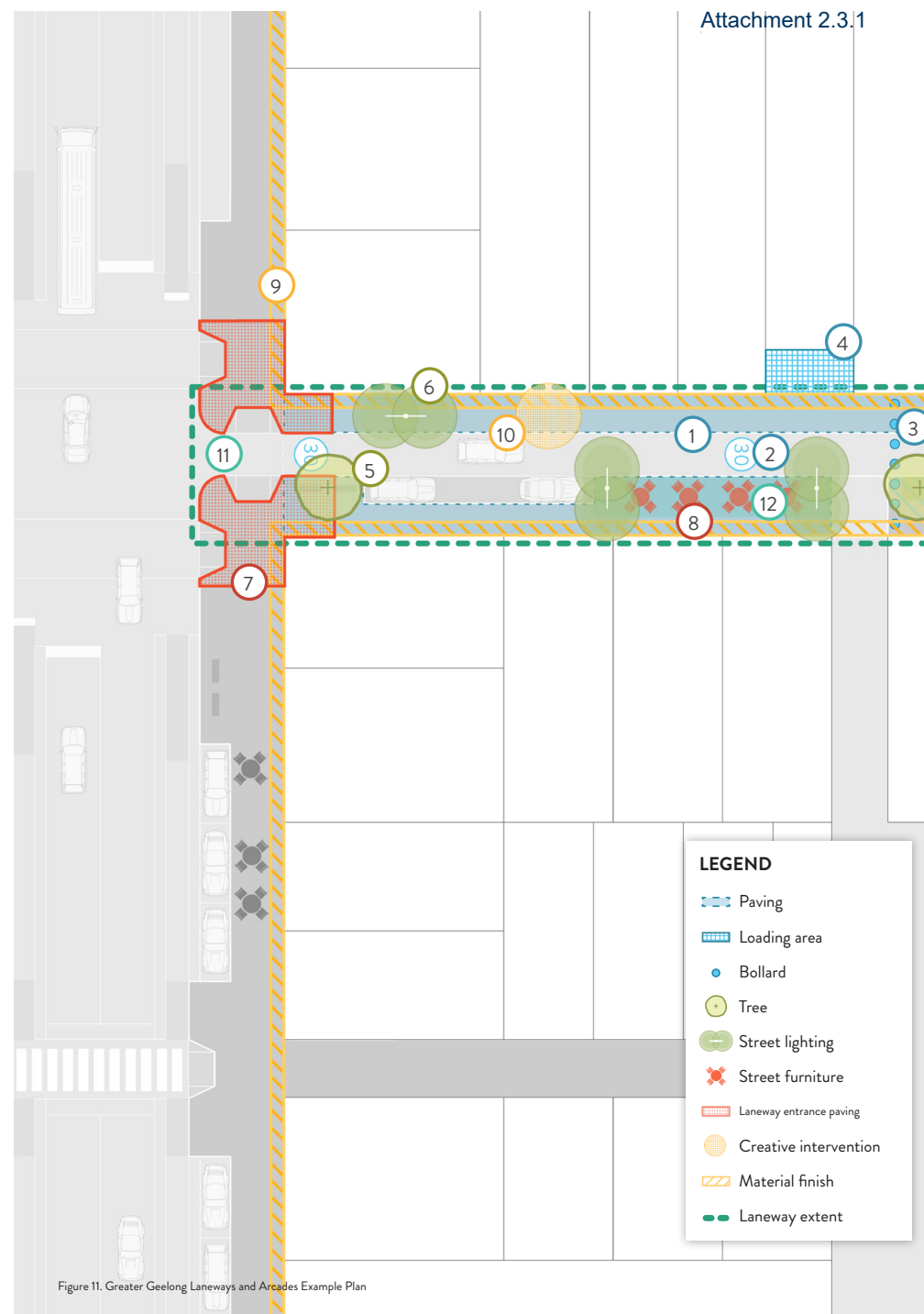


Figure 11. Greater Geelong Laneways and Arcades Example Plan

GREATER GEELONG: CIVIC SPACES

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED

- 1 Civic spaces should contain footpaths that are designed to be universally accessible.
- 2 Civic spaces should be designed to link seamlessly into surrounding streets, civic buildings and access ways.
- 3 Civic spaces should support cycling by providing bicycle parking.
- 4 The design of civic spaces should be coordinated to provide well-placed seating, shade, shelter, and amenities that enable use throughout the seasons, by people of all abilities.
- 5 Clear views from surrounding streets and buildings should be maintained into civic spaces to enhance passive safety and visibility.

GREEN AND RESILIENT

- 7 Civic spaces should support increased tree canopy while promoting distinct character and species diversity between streets and spaces.
- 8 Civic spaces should incorporate water sensitive urban design where possible, including rain gardens, swales, and passive irrigation of gardens and trees.
- 9 Civic spaces should include garden beds and understorey planting with preference for native shrubs, grasses and understorey plant palettes.

ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

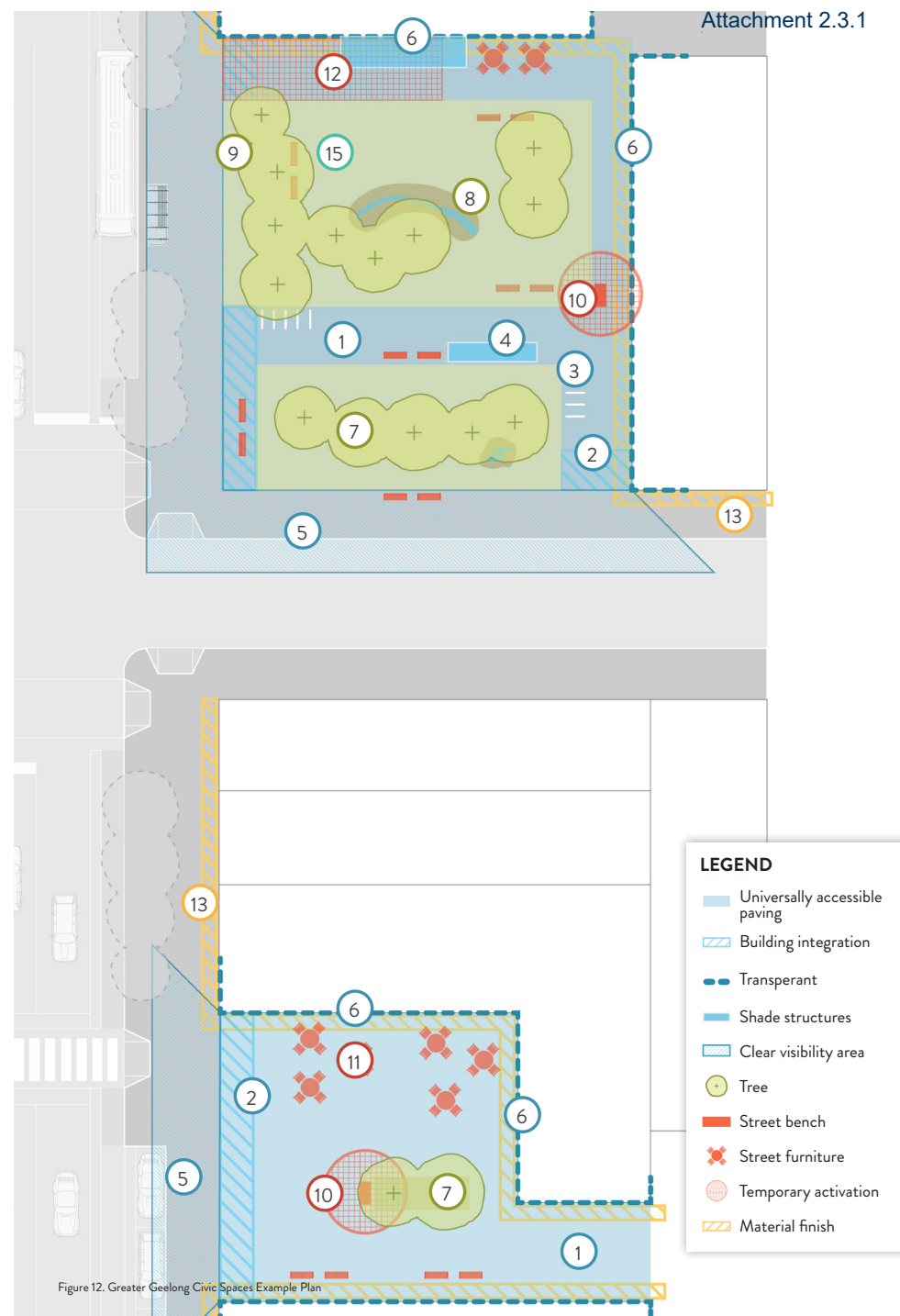
- 10 Design civic spaces with infrastructure (power, water, hardstand areas) to support temporary uses and activation such as art installations, food trucks, and seasonal events.
- 11 Appropriately locate park furniture in areas that are highly visible and close to or adjoining pedestrian desire lines / gathering spaces.
- 12 Design civic spaces to be used in different ways at different times, supporting both programmed events and spontaneous activity for both children and adults of all ages.

AUTHENTIC AND DISTINCT

- 13 Civic Spaces must reflect and enhance the unique character, history, and identity of their place. The design should consider use of local materials and finishes, and where appropriate, materials and finishes from the primary street network palette to create visual continuity.
- 14 Civic spaces should incorporate recognition of Wadawurrung Country and culture into their design through co-design processes guided by the Wadawurrung, where appropriate.

SUSTAINABLE AND DELIVERABLE

- 15 Civic spaces should incorporate water-wise landscaping with native and low-maintenance plant species.



7. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The framework is implemented through a coordinated approach across planning, design, delivery and asset management. It will be incorporated into the planning scheme following adoption and integrated into capital works, asset renewal programs, the planning permit process, and partnerships with developers and other agencies.

Implementation is structured around three components:

- Policy and Design Tools
- Prioritisation and Investment Framework
- Delivery and Implementation Processes

- **Deliverability and value for money**, ensuring projects are feasible, well-timed and represent efficient use of resources.

- **Strategic alignment**, supporting this framework and broader local and Victorian government objectives.

Projects are assessed using qualitative and quantitative evidence, including demographic data, asset condition, delivery readiness and alignment with relevant strategies. A detailed methodology, including scoring and weighting, will be maintained as an internal tool.

POLICY AND DESIGN TOOLS

The Public Realm Framework provides overarching guidance for the planning and design of streets and public spaces across Greater Geelong activity centres. It will be implemented through the City's capital works program, asset management systems, and the planning permit process, and is intended to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme through a future amendment.

Once incorporated, the framework will inform the assessment of development applications within activity centres and major centres, including on privately owned land where public realm outcomes are formed.

Design Standards (in development)

Design Standards will establish detailed technical requirements for materials, finishes and streetscape elements, supporting consistent, high-quality and maintainable public realm outcomes across all projects.

PRIORITISATION AND INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

The prioritisation framework directs investment toward projects that deliver the greatest community and strategic benefit. All public realm works within activity centres, whether City-led, development-led or grant-funded, are assessed against four criteria:

- **Community need and equity**, addressing population growth, access gaps and safety issues.
- **Asset condition and risk**, prioritising failing, unsafe or high-maintenance assets.

INVESTMENT HIERARCHY

Public realm investment is structured across five project types, ensuring the appropriate level of intervention is applied in the right place:

- **Maintain:** Sustain high-performing assets. *Funding: operational maintenance budgets and asset renewal programs.*
- **Renew:** Replace ageing or failing assets in a coordinated way. *Funding: asset renewal programs and capital works allocations.*
- **Upgrade:** Deliver targeted improvements. *Funding: capital works programs, developer contributions and place-based grants.*
- **Tactical / Pilot:** Deliver low-cost, temporary interventions. *Funding: operational budgets, partnerships and grants.*
- **Transform:** Deliver major, place-shaping projects. *Funding: capital works programs, State and Federal grants, partnerships and developer contributions.*

Each project type reflects a different scale of investment, complexity and long-term impact.

FUNDING PRINCIPLES

Funding principles guide how investment is allocated across the program:

- Align funding with place outcomes and strategic priorities.
- Integrate funding across renewal and upgrade programs
Leverage external investment.
- Apply whole-of-life cost thinking, considering maintenance and operational impacts.



GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

Implementation is supported by coordinated governance across planning, urban design, engineering, asset management and delivery teams. Clear roles and responsibilities guide decision-making across the project lifecycle, ensuring consistent application of the framework.

DELIVERY PATHWAYS

Public realm projects are delivered through complementary pathways:

- **City-shaping and strategic projects** — major streets, civic spaces and green spines in key locations.
- **Activity centre and neighbourhood improvements** — targeted local upgrades.
- **Asset renewal and maintenance programs** — ongoing improvement of existing assets.
- **Development-led delivery** — delivered through private development.
- **Pilot and temporary activation** — short-term interventions to test ideas.

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Priority Implementation Actions (Next 2 Years)

- Integrate a public realm audit into asset management systems.
- Finalise and implement Design Standards.
- Establish the prioritisation assessment tool and process.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REVIEW

Progress will be monitored through Council Plan reporting. Performance is assessed at both program and project levels using a defined set of indicators.

Performance indicators are aligned with the framework's Design Principles and are used to inform project scoping and briefs, guide design decision-making, and measure outcomes before and after delivery.

Indicators are applied across the project lifecycle:

- Pre-delivery (baseline) — to understand existing conditions and inform project scope and priorities.
- During planning and design — to guide decision-making and inform project briefs.
- Post-delivery — to evaluate outcomes and inform future investment.

Ongoing asset data and audits support evidence-based decision-making and future capital works planning. The framework will be reviewed every five years, or earlier if required.

INDICATOR CATEGORIES

Indicators are grouped to reflect key public realm outcomes:

Place and design quality

- Proportion of projects aligned with Place Character Areas.
- Application of approved Design Standards across projects.
- Percentage of upgrade or transform projects incorporating public art or interpretation.
- Percentage of upgrade or transform projects with Wadawurrung engagement or input.
- Proportion of projects that document material selection decisions, including consideration of local source availability, lifecycle, performance, and contribution to character.

Use and activation

- Average dwell time in key public spaces.
- Number of events held in public spaces annually.
- Outdoor dining capacity (permit data).
- Ground-floor vacancy rates in activity centres.

Accessibility and movement

- Percentage of projects meeting accessibility Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) standards.
- Number of missing links in accessible path networks resolved annually.
- Ratio of pedestrian space to traffic space in key streets.
- Percentage of streets with wayfinding or legibility elements.

Safety

- Number of pedestrian and cyclist injury crashes per kilometre of street.
- Percentage of key streets meeting public lighting standards.
- Percentage of activity centre streets with speed limits $\leq$ 40 km/h.

Environment and urban greening

- Percentage tree canopy cover in activity centres and key streets.
- Net increase in street trees planted annually.
- Tree species diversity across public realm planting.
- Public realm comfort measures (e.g. shade coverage).
- Percentage increase in permeable surfaces.

Asset and delivery performance

- Percentage of public realm assets rated "good" or better.
- Number of projects delivered in partnership with external stakeholders.

APPENDIX

A1 GLOSSARY

Active Transport

Modes of transport that involve physical activity, such as walking and cycling.

Activity Centre

A location that concentrates a mix of commercial, community and service activities, supporting people to live, work, shop and socialise.

Activity Centre Hierarchy

The classification of centres based on their scale, role and level of activity (e.g. local, neighbourhood or regional centres).

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

An approach to planning, design, and management of the built environment that aims to reduce crime and improve safety by incorporating strategies such as natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance into the design of spaces.

Design Standards

Technical requirements for materials, finishes and public realm elements to ensure consistency, durability and quality.

Hardscape

The built, non-living elements of the public realm, including paving, concrete and structures.

Local Materials

Materials sourced, manufactured, or reclaimed as close as practicable to the project area, with preference given to those that support local and regional industries, reflect the character of the City of Greater Geelong, and minimise environmental impacts.

Open Space

Publicly accessible land primarily used for recreation, leisure and environmental purposes, including parks, reserves and natural areas.

Place Character Area

A defined area with a distinct identity shaped by landscape, history and built form (e.g. central, urban, coastal or rural).

Placemaking

A collaborative approach to planning and design that enhances public spaces to reflect local identity and support community use.

Public Realm

All publicly accessible streets and spaces, including streets, laneways, plazas and civic spaces, where people move, gather and interact.

Softscape

The living elements of the landscape, including trees, planting and garden beds.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

An approach to urban design that integrates stormwater management, water reuse and environmental protection into the built environment.

Whole-of-life Cost

The total cost of an asset over its lifespan, including design, construction, maintenance and replacement.

A2 CREDITS

The City of Greater Geelong acknowledges REALMstudios for their contribution to developing the Public Realm Framework.

SOURCES:

Maps and Plans: REALMstudios

Images: City of Greater Geelong; REALMstudios; Tilt Industrial Design; Studio Semaphore; Resilience Studio; The Conversation; E. Holdings Inc.; AKT Project Management; Aspect Studios (David Svensson); Street Furniture Australia; Taylor Brammer; Arcadia; JPE Design Studio; LatStudios; Paul Upward; Krutika Harale; TCL Landscape Architects; GHD; Hassell; Florence Jaquet; Outlines Landscape Architecture; Citygreen Urban Landscape Solutions

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2.4. Draft Integrated Transport Strategy

Source: **Growth & Place**
Interim Executive Director: **Jacqueline Randles**

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement of the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy (Attachment 1) for community consultation.

Background

2. The Draft Integrated Transport Strategy (Draft Strategy) establishes the City's long-term, municipal wide direction for transport and land-use planning across public transport, walking and riding, roads and streets, parking, freight, travel behaviour and emerging mobility.
3. Greater Geelong is expected to grow from around 300,000 to more than 500,000 residents over the next 30 years. Without a coordinated approach, growth may increase congestion, parking demand and car dependence.
4. The Draft Strategy responds through three goals:
 - 4.1. Secure the investment our growing region needs;
 - 4.2. Manage movement, access and place; and
 - 4.3. Enable practical sustainable transport choices.
5. Three phases of community engagement were undertaken during 2024 and 2025. Feedback from 1,701 participants highlighted public transport, walking connections, road congestion, bicycle-network gaps and equitable access as key priorities.

Key Matters

6. The Draft Strategy establishes a long-term direction and provides a framework for future transport investment, advocacy, planning and delivery.
7. Public transport is positioned as the backbone of future growth, supported by walking and riding for shorter trips and first-and-last-mile connections. Private vehicles will continue to play an important role where other options are not practical.
8. The Draft Strategy shifts from responding to forecast traffic growth primarily through additional road and parking capacity towards a Vision and Validate approach that tests investment against the future transport system Greater Geelong wants to create.
9. School travel is a major focus. The Draft Strategy prioritises safer walking, riding and public transport access to schools, supported by infrastructure improvements and travel-behaviour programs. It establishes targets for substantially increasing active and public transport travel to school.

10. Change will be incremental. The Draft Strategy identifies that practical alternatives will be improved first, with road space, parking and travel-demand measures progressively adjusted as Greater Geelong grows and sustainable transport becomes more viable.
11. The Draft Strategy strengthens the integration of land use and transport by aligning growth with transport infrastructure and services and protecting corridors required for future public transport, roads and active transport.
12. The Draft Strategy acknowledges the City's role is to Deliver, Partner or Advocate, recognising that major public transport, rail and State-road improvements depend heavily on Victorian and Australian Government investment.
13. The two-year Action Plan references all City of Greater Geelong Priority Projects (2026) related to transport.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Integrated Transport Strategy (Attachment 1) for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
- 2. Notes that a further report will be presented to Council following community consultation.**

Financial Sustainability

14. The Draft Strategy establishes priorities and a framework for future investment but does not commit the City to immediate delivery of all identified initiatives.
15. Implementation will be staged through Council Plan, annual budget, capital works and asset-renewal processes, supported by State and Federal funding, developer contributions, grants and partnerships where available.
16. Major public transport, rail and State-road improvements will primarily require external government investment. The Draft Strategy strengthens the City's evidence base and pipeline of investment-ready projects to support future advocacy and funding opportunities.

Community Engagement

17. Three phases of community engagement were undertaken during 2024 and 2025, involving 1,701 participants. Key themes included:
 - 17.1. More frequent, reliable and competitive public transport;
 - 17.2. Better footpath connections and safer crossings;
 - 17.3. Concern about increasing congestion;
 - 17.4. Closing gaps in the bicycle network; and
 - 17.5. Equitable and accessible transport choices.
18. The Draft Strategy will be released for community feedback before being refined and returned to Council for consideration for adoption.

Social Equity and Sustainability

19. The Draft Strategy supports social equity by improving access to employment, education, health care and everyday destinations for people who cannot or choose not to drive.
20. It seeks to address transport-accessibility gaps across established suburbs, growth areas, coastal communities and locations with limited public transport.
21. The Draft Strategy supports safer, healthier and more independent travel to school, while reducing school-related traffic and parking pressure.
22. Sustainable transport choices can also reduce household transport costs, improve health outcomes and reduce transport emissions.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

23. A Gender Impact Assessment has commenced and will be completed when community consultation is undertaken. This assessment may be further refined following community consultation and before the Draft Strategy is finalised.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

24. The Draft Strategy is informed by relevant national, State and local legislation, strategies and policies, including the *Transport Integration Act 2010*, *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, Plan for Victoria and the Victorian Government's Movement and Place Framework.
25. The Draft Strategy also builds on the G21 Integrated Transport Strategy, Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, Settlement Strategy and growth-area transport planning, including the Geelong Growth Area Transport and Services (GGATIS) modelling and recommendations.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

26. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Core and Critical Infrastructure
Healthy and Caring Community
27. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
A fast, reliable and connected transport network.

Conflict of Interest

28. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

29. The Draft Strategy supports Council's balanced appetite for environmental risk by enabling measurable improvements in sustainability outcomes, including reduced transport emissions, through greater use of public transport, walking, riding, and lower-emission vehicles.
30. Better integration of transport and land use will support more compact development, reduce the need for unnecessary travel, and make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and resources.
31. The Draft Strategy also recognises the role of streets in improving environmental resilience, supporting urban greening, and creating attractive, functional public spaces. These outcomes seek to embed sustainable practice into the way the transport network and urban environment evolve over time.

Environmental Sustainability

32. The Draft Strategy supports emissions reduction by enabling more trips to be made by public transport, walking, riding and lower-emission vehicles.
33. Better integration of transport and land use will help reduce unnecessary travel, support more compact development and make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
34. The Draft Strategy also recognises the role of streets in supporting urban greening, climate resilience and attractive public spaces.

Attachments

1. Draft Integrated Transport Strategy [2.4.1 - 58 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY



DRAFT SEPTEMBER 2026

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Strategy sets the long-term direction for creating a safe, efficient, reliable and connected transport network that enables choice and supports sustainable development. It will guide integrated decision-making across land use, infrastructure and services to improve connectivity, support growth, expand access and deliver a more liveable, inclusive and productive Greater Geelong. It acknowledges that:

- public transport should be the backbone of transport across the region and the driver of development.
- active transport should facilitate short trips to schools, everyday destinations and access to public transport.
- private vehicles play an important role in moving people and goods around the region, especially for trips where public and active transport options are not viable.

SCOPE

The Strategy provides a framework for delivery of an integrated transport network. It will address all key modes of transport, the movement of people and freight, and the relationship between transport and land use. The strategy will guide long-term priorities, advocacy and investment decisions, while informing more detailed plans and projects delivered by the City and other agencies. The strategy will build on the outputs and recommendations from the G21 Integrated Transport Strategy and the extensive work for the growth area planning, including the Geelong Growth Areas Transport Infrastructure Strategy.

THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY VISION

Over the next 30 years, sustainable development in Greater Geelong will be driven by the creation of compact, liveable and accessible neighbourhoods supported by sustainable transport. This will require better integration of land use and transport planning, making the most of new and existing public transport connections, advocating for improved frequency, connectivity and amenity, and delivering the active infrastructure needed to make walking, riding and scooting safe, convenient and attractive in both new and established communities.



KEY CHALLENGES

Over the next 30 years, Greater Geelong will grow from a regional city of around 300,000 people into a major urban centre with more than 500,000 residents. This rapid growth across Armstrong Creek, the Northern and Western Growth Areas, and established parts of Geelong will place mounting pressure on a transport system that still relies heavily on private vehicles.

That growth comes at a cost. Unless we give people safe, sustainable and practical alternatives, car dependence will increase congestion, deepen inequity and reduce liveability. Over time, this could erode many of the qualities that make our region such an attractive place to live.

We need a different approach: a transport system that offers genuine choice and works for everyone.

A LIMITED PUBLIC TRANSPORT OFFERING

For everyday trips, buses still cannot compete with driving.

Many routes run infrequently, take indirect paths and provide slow journeys. They also focus heavily on travel to and from central Geelong, making it harder to move between suburbs or reach jobs, education and services elsewhere in the region.

The Bellarine Peninsula and other townships face similar challenges. Without better services, many residents have little practical choice but to drive to everyday destinations.

Further, V/Line services can become crowded during peak periods, while train station car parks often fill up. Indirect and poorly timed bus connections add to overall journey times, making public transport less attractive for longer trips.

Our population is also growing in locations without convenient access to rail. New stations, minor rail upgrades and improved services could help address this gap in places such as Armstrong Creek and the Western Growth Area.



RAPID POPULATION GROWTH AND DISPERSED DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Much of Greater Geelong's growth is occurring on the urban fringe, increasing the distance people must travel to reach jobs, schools, services and established centres.

When it comes to new growth areas, roads are typically delivered first. Public transport often follows much later, after communities have already formed and residents have built their daily routines around driving. This pattern can lock in car dependence from the outset.

Established neighbourhoods present a different challenge. Private vehicle access largely shaped their street layouts, land-use patterns and parking expectations. Adapting these areas to support more walking, riding, scooting and public transport can be complex, particularly when changes require difficult decisions about how to use limited street space.



TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND CAR DEPENDENCE

Congestion is already increasing at key pinch points across the region. Without change, people will spend even more time travelling by car.

The 2021 Census found that people made 91% of work trips to central Geelong by car. Regional modelling for the G21 Integrated Transport Strategy shows how serious this problem could become. Under a business-as-usual scenario for 2041, the G21 region would record another 7.9 million vehicle kilometres each day, accumulate 65,000 hours of daily delays and face pressure for the equivalent of 267 kilometres of additional traffic lanes.

Parking is another growing concern. Central Geelong already faces significant pressure, and the Central Geelong Framework Plan projects that employment could double to around 60,000 jobs by 2050. If car dependence remains at its current level, that would mean twice as many people searching for parking in and around central Geelong.

Cars also account for many short local journeys that people could make by walking, riding or scooting. These trips add to congestion, emissions, noise and parking demand.



GAPS IN NETWORKS THAT ENCOURAGE WALKING, RIDING AND SCOOTING

Travelling locally without a car remains harder than it should be.

Some growth areas received active transport infrastructure early, but many established neighbourhoods still have significant gaps. Missing footpaths, limited priority crossings and disconnected bicycle routes make it difficult for people to reach schools, activity centres and train stations on foot or by bike.

Busy, high-speed roads can divide communities. They also create barriers to safe and convenient movement, while much of the street network continues to prioritise vehicle traffic over people walking, riding and scooting.

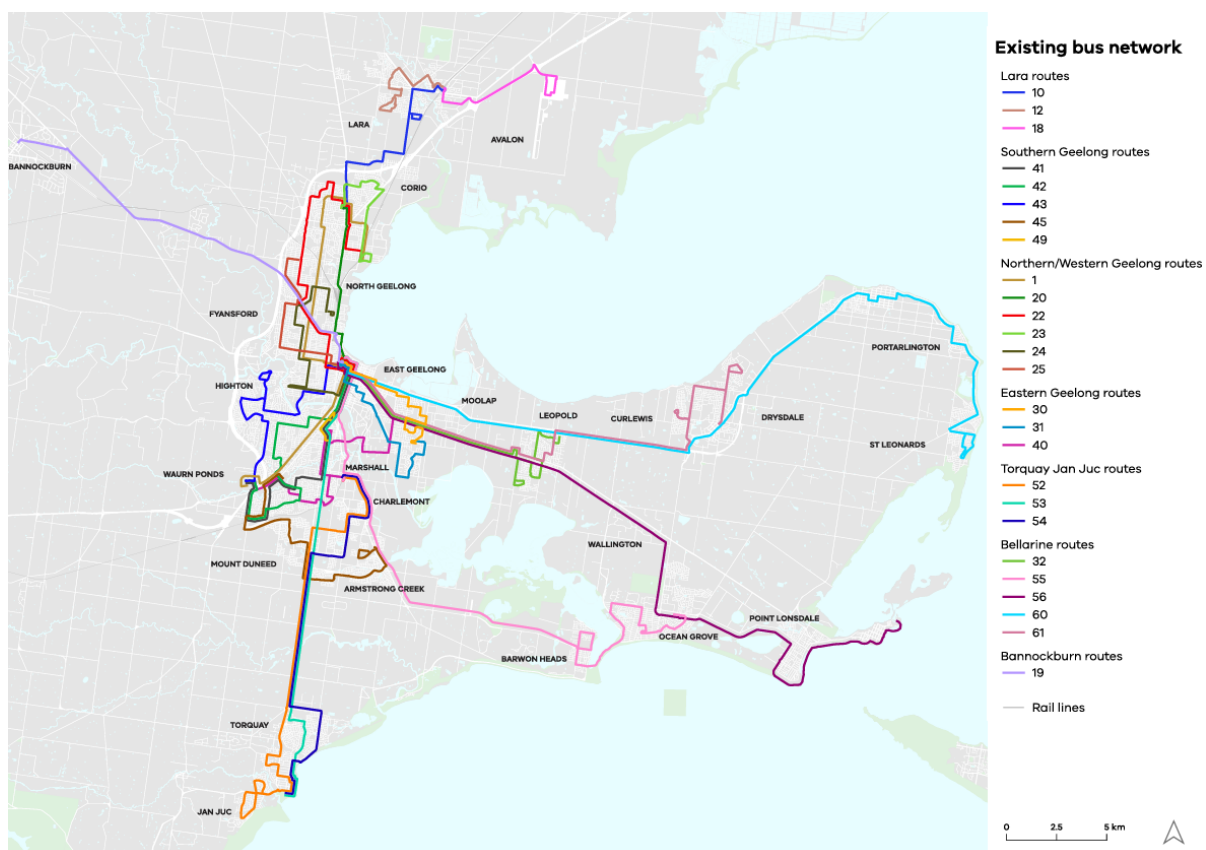


EQUITY, INCLUSION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Access to frequent, reliable public transport and safe active transport options varies widely across Greater Geelong. The largest gaps affect older suburbs, outer growth areas and coastal communities, limiting access to employment, education, services and social opportunities.

Owning and operating a car continues to become more expensive. Lower-income households carry a disproportionate share of that burden, yet many people still need a car to participate fully in work and community life.

Transport also produces a major share of greenhouse gas emissions, most of which come from private vehicle use. Reducing car dependence and shifting more journeys to sustainable transport will help strengthen climate resilience and meet our target of net zero community emissions by 2035 (Climate Change Response Plan).



ROLES IN TRANSPORT AND LAND USE PLANNING

Creating a safe, efficient, reliable and connected transport network for Greater Geelong requires shared effort. The City, the State Government, transport operators, developers, employers, community organisations and residents all influence how people and goods move across the region.

Some actions sit within the City's direct control, particularly the planning, delivery and management of local streets and public spaces. Many of the biggest transport outcomes, however, depend on partnership, coordination and advocacy across all levels of government. By working together, we can better align land use and transport planning, improve access and choice, and support a more liveable, sustainable and connected Greater Geelong.

COUNCIL

The City of Greater Geelong plays a key role in planning, delivering and managing the local transport network and in shaping how land use and transport work together. We do this by:

Delivering

We manage, maintain and renew an extensive network of local roads, streets, paths and public spaces. We also plan, design and deliver new infrastructure and upgrades to respond to growth, improve safety, strengthen local connections and support more sustainable travel choices. This includes managing kerbside space for parking, loading, public transport and active transport.

Partnering

We work with the State and Federal Governments to secure funding and deliver transport projects that benefit the community. We also work with developers through precinct and growth planning to help ensure new communities are connected and supported by appropriate transport infrastructure from the outset. Partnerships with schools, local organisations and community groups also help improve safety and encourage active transport.

Advocating

We advocate on behalf of our community for more frequent and reliable public transport, improvements to the arterial road network, safer and more complete active transport networks, and investment that supports Greater Geelong's growth and liveability.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The State Government has a central role in shaping Greater Geelong's transport future through its responsibility for public transport services, the arterial road network, major transport infrastructure, transport regulation and key elements of land use planning.

The State Government plans, funds and delivers major transport projects, manages the principal road and rail networks, and determines the level and quality of public transport services across the region. This includes decisions about train and bus service frequency, span, coverage, integration and interchange, all of which strongly influence whether people have practical alternatives to driving.

The State Government also plays an important role in growth planning, precinct planning and development coordination. Its decisions about when and where infrastructure and services are delivered can either reduce or reinforce long-term car dependence. For Greater Geelong, a stronger alignment between land use planning, public transport provision and transport infrastructure delivery will be critical to supporting sustainable growth.

The City will continue to work closely with the State Government to align priorities, coordinate planning and advocate for the investment and policy changes needed to support a more connected, efficient and equitable transport system.

COMMUNITY

The community also plays an important role in shaping how the transport system performs. The travel choices people make each day collectively influence congestion, parking demand, emissions, safety and the viability of public transport and active transport investment.

As Greater Geelong grows, traffic congestion will continue to worsen if most trips continue to be made by car. Even small changes in travel behaviour can have a meaningful cumulative impact. Choosing to walk, ride, scoot, catch public transport, work from home, travel outside peak periods or combine multiple modes can help reduce pressure on the network and make it easier for those who need to drive.

There is strong potential for more local trips to shift to sustainable modes. Many residents live within a walkable or rideable distance of school, shops, work and services. Supporting and enabling these choices through better infrastructure, safer streets and more reliable public transport will be essential, but community uptake will also be a key part of achieving a more efficient and sustainable transport system.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

NATIONAL POLICY

National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy 2025
 National Urban Policy
 Australian Transport Assessment and Planning (ATAP) Guidelines
 National Planning Reform Blueprint
 Infrastructure Policy Statement
 National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30

STATE POLICY

Transport Integration Act 2010
 Planning and Environment Act 1987
 Victorian Planning Provisions
 Plan for Victoria
 Movement & Place in Victoria
 Victorian Freight Plan
 Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28
 Victorian Active Transport Strategy 2026
 Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021 2030

REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY

G21 Integrated Transport Strategy
 Greater Geelong Planning Scheme
 Council Plan 2025- 2029
 Geelong Port and Land Freight Infrastructure Plan
 Vision Zero Geelong: Safe Local Travel 2022- 27
 Shared Trails Masterplan 2020

GROWTH, LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Central Geelong Framework Plan
 Settlement Strategy 2020
 Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area Framework Plan
 Armstrong Creek Framework Plan
 Urban Design Frameworks
 Geelong Growth Area Transport Infrastructure Strategy
 Environment Strategy 2020-2030
 Parking Permit Policy

ENGAGEMENT

PROCESS

In 2024 and 2025, we asked the community about travelling to, from and around Greater Geelong through three phases of engagement focused on different modes of transport. This engagement helped us understand people's current travel experiences, the challenges they face and their aspirations for a more seamless and connected transport network.

WHAT WE HEARD

In 2024, we asked the community about the key issues, opportunities and long-term vision for movement across Greater Geelong. Following this initial engagement, we prepared a background report to help frame the region's transport challenges and inform the next stages of consultation.

In 2025, we published the background report and undertook two more targeted phases of engagement. In April, we sought feedback on walking, riding, other forms of active transport and the Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) and Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCC). In August, we asked the community about public transport and driving. Together, these phases provided a clearer understanding of what our community values and expects from the transport network.

Feedback from all three phases informed the development of the draft Integrated Transport Strategy.

Across the three phases, we heard from 1,701 people. The most common themes were:

1. More frequent, reliable and competitive public transport within Geelong and to Melbourne.
2. Better footpath connections and safer crossing opportunities for people walking.
3. Concern about worsening traffic congestion.
4. Opportunities to close gaps in the bicycle network and provide more bicycle parking.
5. The need for a transport system that is equitable and accessible for all.
6. The importance of fast and reliable connections to Melbourne.

HOW ENGAGEMENT SHAPED THE STRATEGY

Engagement helped identify the issues and outcomes that matter most to the Greater Geelong community. Community feedback was considered alongside input from internal council departments, neighbouring municipalities, State agencies and interest groups to refine the vision, aspirations and strategic directions set out in this strategy.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Greater Geelong's transport network has been shaped by successive waves of growth, changing travel patterns and evolving transport technologies. What began as a compact, walkable city focused on trade, shipping and administration has gradually become a larger and more dispersed urban area, with growing reliance on private vehicles.

For much of Geelong's early development, people lived relatively close to jobs, shops and services. Walking was central to daily life, supported over time by coastal shipping, rail, trams and later buses. The original suburbs were well connected to central Geelong, and most daily needs could be reached by walking, riding or public transport.

In the post-war period, development increasingly shifted toward a car-based model. Trams were replaced by buses, suburbs expanded outward, and more people began living further from work, shops and services. This pattern of dispersed development has increased dependence on private vehicles and placed growing pressure on the road network, particularly at key access points to central Geelong and other major destinations.

This legacy continues to shape Greater Geelong today. Car ownership and car use generally increase with distance from central Geelong. Continued growth in places such as Armstrong Creek, the Northern and Western growth areas, Leopold, Clifton Springs and Lara West will add further pressure to the transport network. In established areas, there is limited capacity to continue widening roads without impacting on surrounding buildings and public space, which means congestion is likely to worsen unless a greater share of trips can be made by walking, riding and public transport.

Growth is also being accommodated in established suburbs. Consistent with Plan for Victoria, and with a target of 77,500 new homes in existing urban areas, Greater Geelong will see more housing in activity centres, along transport corridors and within established neighbourhoods. If these new homes are accompanied by car ownership rates like the current municipal average of 1.9 cars per household, traffic and parking pressures will intensify further. This reinforces the need to align land use and transport planning so that growth is supported by better transport choice, not greater car dependence.

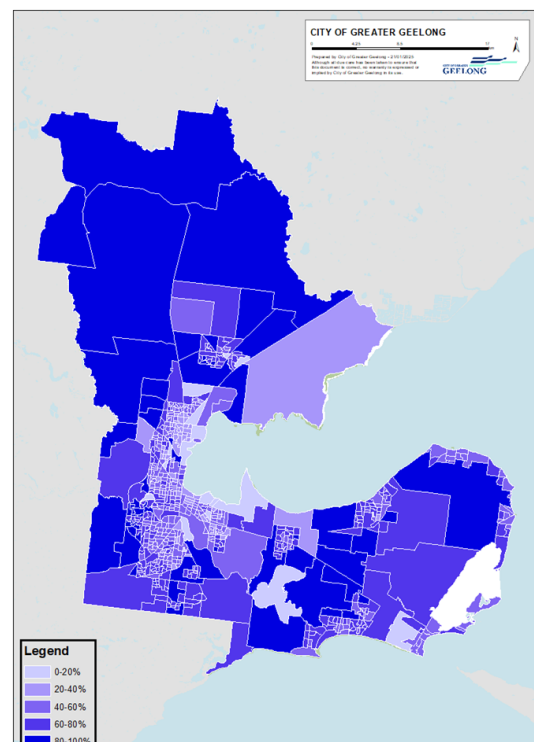


Figure 1 - Households with 2 or more cars

A SHORT HISTORY OF TRANSPORT IN GEELONG

Geelong has moved through several distinct transport eras. Each era reflects the dominant travel modes of the time, the way the city developed, and the role Geelong played within the wider region. This demonstrates that Geelong has gone through many periods of change when it comes to how people move around the region and this will continue to evolve.

Time immemorial to the 1830s Wadawurrung Country and walking routes	Walking and canoe travel were central to movement across Country. Well-established songlines and walking tracks connected places, people and resources.
1838 to 1856 Port and dray town	Coastal shipping into Corio Bay supported trade and movement. Horse and bullock drays travelled on rough tracks to the Western District and early goldfields. Walking remained important within the compact town.
1857 to 1911 “The Pivot” as a rail and coastal shipping hub	Steam rail and coastal shipping became central to regional connections. Horse-drawn vehicles and walking were common for local trips.
1912 to 1956 Tram, rail and early motor era	Electric trams and walking supported many local trips. Rail played a major role in regional passenger travel and freight. Private car and truck ownership grew rapidly over this period.
1956 to the late 1980s Car, bus and post-war suburban expansion	Private cars became the dominant mode for most trips. Buses replaced trams and became the backbone of public transport. Rail remained important for longer-distance travel and freight.
Late 1980s to the mid-2000s Freeway city and two-way Melbourne commuting	Car travel was reinforced by higher-standard arterial roads and freeway connections. V/Line rail grew in importance but remained a secondary choice for many Geelong–Melbourne commuters.
Mid-2000s to present Regional rail and growth-area city	The car remains dominant, but regional rail has become much stronger, and the bus network has been restructured. There is increasing policy emphasis on walking and riding, particularly in growth areas.

HOW WE WILL PLAN AND MAKE DECISIONS

Greater Geelong is growing quickly. The transport decisions we make now will shape how people access jobs, education, services, open space and community life over the coming decades.

This Strategy uses a clear set of planning principles to guide how transport decisions are made, tested and delivered.

WHY THIS STRATEGY MATTERS

Our Clever and Creative Future Vision, Council Plan, Transport Integration Act and the Sustainable Development Goals all point to the same outcome: a connected, inclusive and sustainable region where people can move safely, efficiently and affordably.

Transport is central to this outcome. It affects where people can live and work, how businesses operate, how neighbourhoods function, and how the region responds to growth, climate change and social change.

HOW WE PLAN AND PRIORITISE

The City will adopt a Vision and Validate approach. This means starting with the future transport network we want, then testing whether projects, policies and investment decisions help deliver it.

This approach avoids simply responding to forecast traffic growth with more road capacity or parking. Instead, it considers the full range of options: land-use planning, public transport, walking and riding, better use of existing streets, parking management, shared mobility and travel demand management. The mode share targets in Figure 4 reflect the vision we want to see realised. Transport will be planned as an integrated system. Decisions about housing, roads, parking, public transport, freight and active transport all affect each other and must be considered together.

The Mode Prioritisation Framework at Figure 3 will guide how modes are prioritised. Walking, wheeling, riding, scooting and public transport will be prioritised where they are a practical choice particularly for everyday trips. Cars, freight, servicing, emergency access and accessible parking will continue to play important roles, but road and kerbside space must be used more efficiently as the region grows.

The Framework does not assume a one size fits all approach for Greater Geelong. Instead, it is a flexible tool that considers the purpose and distance of each trip. For example, if the travel distance to work makes it unreasonable to walk, wheel, ride or scoot then public transport becomes the highest priority in that instance. Subsequently, walking, wheeling, riding and scooting become the highest priority options to get people from their homes to the public transport that facilitates the longer trip if the Public Transport is available. Subsequently, private vehicle use becomes the priority for those who have limited access to public transport services.



Figure 2 - The Vision and Validate approach

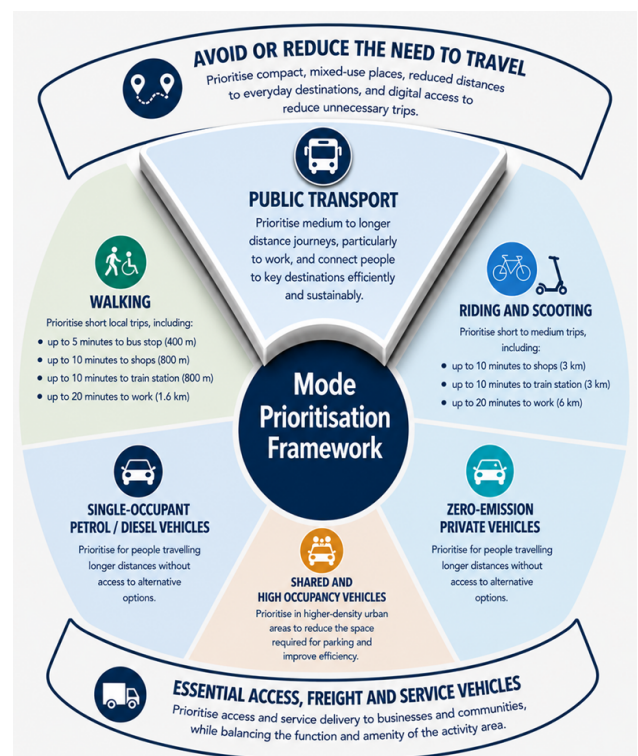


Figure 3 – Mode Prioritisation Framework

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE AND TESTED

Decisions will be informed by evidence, scenario testing, community experience and ongoing monitoring.

Different streets have different roles. A freight route, bus corridor, local street, school precinct and town centre should be planned in very different ways.

The Movement and Place framework will guide how roads and streets balance movement, access and local activity. It will help protect strategic transport corridors while supporting safer, more attractive and accessible local streets and centres.

Transport decisions will also be tested against safety, accessibility, equity and climate outcomes. Vision Zero and Safe System principles will guide road safety decisions. Universal Design will ensure accessibility for the broad range of users in our community. Addressing transport inequity will help identify who benefits, who is affected and who may be left without practical choices.

Climate resilience and emissions reduction will also shape decisions, ensuring the network supports lower-emission travel and is better prepared for heat, flooding and other climate risks.

A one size fits all approach to increasing sustainable transport use does not work for a place like Greater Geelong. Some areas will find it more practical to use active transport to get to work, while others will rely more on public transport and private vehicles. The City aims to support public transport uplift by supplying safe and convenient routes to get to train stations and bus stops, while also supporting schools and local shopping precincts.

Indicator	2021 Census	Life of strategy 2026-36	Aspirational 2036-2056
Percentage of trips to work by walking.	2.85%	5%	10%
Percentage of trips to work by riding or scooting.	0.94%	5%	10%
Percentage of trips to work by public transport	2.23%	7.5%	30%
Percentage of local primary school children walking, riding or scooting to school	-	50%	75%
Percentage of local secondary school students walking, riding or scooting to school	-	20%	40%
Percentage of local secondary school students catching public transport to school	-	20%	50%

Figure 4 - Mode share targets

HOW THE PRINCIPLES ARE APPLIED

These principles will be applied through the Strategy's three goals.

- Secure the investment our growing region needs by aligning advocacy, partnerships and external funding with the preferred future transport network.
- Manage movement, access and place by using roads, streets, parking and kerbside space according to their role, context and community value.
- Enable practical sustainable transport choices by making walking, riding, public transport and shared mobility safer, more convenient and more realistic for everyday trips.

The eight transport themes show where these principles will be applied across the network and provide a consistent framework for planning, prioritising, delivering and reviewing transport decisions.

Term	Definition
Clever and Creative Future	Greater Geelong's long-term community vision. For transport, it means creating a connected, inclusive and sustainable region where people can access opportunity, participate in community life and move around safely and efficiently.
Council Plan	Council's four-year strategic direction. The Integrated Transport Strategy helps deliver the Council Plan by guiding transport planning, infrastructure investment, advocacy and service delivery.
Transport Integration Act	Victoria's legislative framework for an integrated and sustainable transport system. It requires transport decisions to consider access, safety, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, efficiency and integration.
Sustainable Development Goals	A global framework for achieving a more sustainable, equitable and resilient future. For this Strategy, the Sustainable Development Goals help connect transport decisions with broader outcomes for health, equity, climate action, economic opportunity, sustainable communities, responsible infrastructure and environmental protection.
Movement and Place framework	An approach that recognises streets have different roles. Some roads need to move people and goods efficiently, while others need to support local access, business activity, walking, riding, public life and community identity.
Vision Zero and Safe System	A road safety approach based on the principle that death and serious injury should not be accepted as an inevitable cost of movement. It aims to create a transport system where mistakes do not result in fatal or serious harm.
Universal Design	Designing transport infrastructure, services and public spaces so they can be used by as many people as possible. This includes considering the whole journey, such as paths, crossings, stops, stations, seating, lighting, information and transfers.



Figure 5 - The Safe System

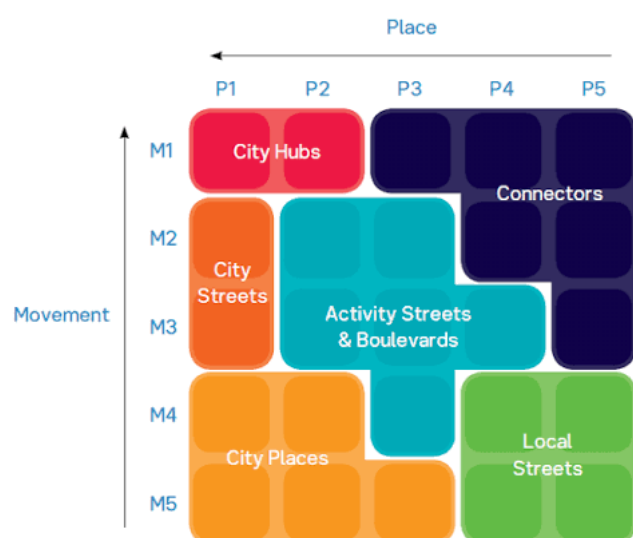


Figure 6 - Movement and Place framework



STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1 SECURE THE INVESTMENT OUR GROWING REGION NEEDS

Greater Geelong's growth will depend on timely investment in the transport infrastructure and services needed to connect new and established communities.

Much of this investment will include rail, public transport services, arterial roads and major enabling infrastructure. This is the responsibility of the Victorian and Australian governments.

Without this investment, population and employment growth will place increasing pressure on local roads and parking, reinforce car dependence and reduce access, productivity and liveability.

GOAL 2 MANAGE MOVEMENT, ACCESS AND PLACE

Roads and streets must support the efficient movement of people and goods, provide access to homes, businesses and services, and contribute to safe, attractive and active places. These functions will vary by location. A major freight or public transport corridor will operate differently from a local street, school precinct or activity-centre main street.

We will apply Movement and Place principles to balance these competing demands. This means planning each road and street according to its role and context. Movement efficiency will not be pursued at the expense of accessibility, local amenity or the quality of public space. Place outcomes will be planned without undermining essential access for public transport, freight, servicing and emergency vehicles.

This approach is increasingly important as Greater Geelong grows. Road and kerbside space are finite public assets and continued widening or additional parking cannot accommodate every increase in travel demand. Managing movement, access and place together will help the City use existing streets more effectively, protect liveability and economic activity, and support a more productive and accessible transport network.

GOAL 3 ENABLE PRACTICAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CHOICES

Sustainable transport becomes a practical choice when people have safe, direct and convenient ways to reach everyday destinations. Many trips to schools, shops, parks, community facilities and public transport are short enough to be made by walking, wheeling, riding or scooting. However, missing links, unsafe crossings, disconnected routes, infrequent services and limited end-of-trip facilities can make driving the easier or only realistic option.

The City will improve the infrastructure, connections, information and supporting programs that allow more people to travel sustainably. This includes completing active transport networks, improving access to public transport, providing secure bicycle and micromobility parking, and working with schools, employers and communities to support different travel choices.

These improvements will give people greater choice, reduce pressure on roads and parking, and improve access for children, older people, people with disability and households without a car. They will also support healthier lifestyles, lower household transport costs and reduced emissions.

Sustainable travel programs will be coordinated with improvements to infrastructure and services. Encouragement alone will not create lasting change where alternatives remain unsafe or inconvenient. By progressively making walking, riding, scooting and public transport more practical, we can manage current transport pressures while building a more accessible, resilient and liveable transport system.

MANAGING THE TRANSITION AS WE GROW

Greater Geelong will move towards a more sustainable transport system in stages. Different parts of the municipality have different needs, so one approach will not work everywhere.

In the short term, we will protect essential access and make better use of existing roads and parking. We will also seek to improve bus priority and public transport access, close priority gaps in walking and riding networks, and plan for future growth.

Parking controls will reflect local demand and user needs, with an emphasis on availability, turnover and efficient use of existing spaces. In areas experiencing major change, persistent parking pressure or strong access to sustainable transport, the City may investigate planning tools such as parking overlays. These tools could better align parking supply with local conditions and transport goals.

As public transport becomes more frequent and reliable, and walking and riding networks become safer and more complete, we will strengthen travel-demand management. We will also direct road and kerbside space towards the uses that provide the greatest public value.

These uses may include public transport, access for people with disability, loading, walking, riding, trees, public spaces and local business activity.

Evidence will guide each stage. We will monitor accessibility, public transport performance, travel choices, parking demand, safety, equity, economic activity and community experience.

Where alternatives remain inadequate, we will maintain suitable transitional access and pursue the investment needed to close the gap. Where sustainable options work well, we will move more quickly into the next stage.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT AS THE BACKBONE OF GROWTH

The Victorian Government holds primary responsibility for public transport services and major infrastructure. The City plays a different but important role.

We will build a strong, evidence-based case for investment, protect future transport corridors and align land-use decisions with transport planning. We will also use council-controlled streets and infrastructure to help public transport operate reliably.

Greater Geelong needs a frequent and dependable core public transport network to support sustainable development and accommodate regional growth. The City will continue advocating for this investment by demonstrating the need for better services and identifying unmet demand.

Plan for Victoria identifies areas with good public transport access as suitable locations for growth. But access alone will not shift travel habits in a largely car-dependent regional city such as Geelong. Public transport must offer a practical and competitive alternative to driving for everyday journeys.

Frequent, reliable and convenient services will give more people a genuine choice. This will reduce reliance on private vehicles and support further development in well-connected locations.

OUR STRATEGIC RESPONSE

	<u>Public Transport</u>	<u>Land Use, Growth and Access</u>	<u>Active Transport</u>	<u>Sustainable Travel Behaviours</u>
Goal 1 SECURE	Advocate for the services and infrastructure required to establish a frequent, reliable and connected public transport network.	Work with governments, developers and infrastructure providers to align transport investment with planned housing and employment growth.	Seek external investment in strategic active transport infrastructure that is beyond the City's capacity or control to deliver alone.	Pursue government and institutional partnerships that support travel-demand and behaviour-change programs.
Goal 2 MANAGE	Manage council-controlled roads and kerbside space to support safe and reliable public transport operations.	Ensure new development provides appropriate access and contributes to the transport infrastructure it generates demand for.	Maintain and operate our active transport assets, so routes remain safe, accessible and fit for purpose.	Embed sustainable travel planning into major developments, events and the City's operations.
Goal 3 ENABLE	Improve the local connections and passenger facilities that allow people to use public transport.	Shape development and local infrastructure, so sustainable travel becomes a practical choice.	Plan and progressively complete connected networks that make walking, wheeling, riding and scooting practical for everyday trips.	Help people and organisations understand, experience and adopt practical sustainable transport options.

<u>Roads, Streets and Road Safety</u>	<u>Parking and Kerbside Management</u>	<u>Freight, Servicing and Logistics</u>	<u>Inclusive, Shared and Low-Emission Mobility</u>
Advocate for investment in State-managed roads and intersections where improvements are required to support safety, growth and broader network performance.	Seek external partnership only where new parking or access infrastructure provides a demonstrated precinct or network benefit.	Advocate for strategic freight connections that support industry, the Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport and access to regional and national markets.	Seek funding and policy support for accessible mobility, community transport and the transition to lower-emission passenger transport.
Plan and operate roads and streets according to their movement, access and place roles.	Manage parking and kerbside space as finite public assets according to demand, access needs and the role of each place.	Manage freight routes, loading and servicing so goods can move efficiently while limiting impacts on sensitive places.	Manage accessibility, shared mobility and charging infrastructure operating on council land and streets.
Ensure road and street design supports safe access to local destinations and sustainable transport networks.	Use parking policy to support efficient land use and progressively reduce dependence on parking in highly accessible locations.	Support more coordinated and lower-impact freight and logistics practices where these are operationally suitable.	Support transport options that address access gaps and reduce reliance on private vehicle ownership.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

A frequent, reliable, accessible and connected public transport network that provides a practical alternative to driving and supports Greater Geelong's growth.

Public transport will connect people to employment, education, health care, shops, services and community life. It will improve access for people who cannot or choose not to drive and allow central Geelong, activity centres and growth areas to develop without a corresponding increase in traffic and parking demand.

WHY IT MATTERS

Greater Geelong cannot support future population and employment growth through private vehicle travel alone. As more people travel to central Geelong, activity centres, employment precincts, hospitals, schools and universities, car dependence will place even greater pressure on roads, parking and household transport costs.

Public transport uses road and parking space more efficiently because it can carry many people at once. It also supports social inclusion, lowers emissions and connects people with opportunities. Better services will help Greater Geelong accommodate more homes and jobs around activity centres, railway stations and major transport corridors.

Right now, the network falls short. Many services run too infrequently, take indirect routes or move too slowly to compete with driving. The bus network focuses heavily on journeys to and from central Geelong, which makes some suburb-to-suburb trips difficult. Parts of the Bellarine Peninsula, growth areas, employment precincts, townships and rural communities also have limited-service coverage and operating hours. Bus and train services do not always connect conveniently. Some stops and interchanges lack accessible paths, shelter, lighting and safe crossings, making public transport harder to use.

Communities need public transport from the beginning. When services arrive only after neighbourhoods have developed, residents often establish car-dependent travel habits that become difficult to change. People will rely on public transport for daily travel only when it offers a genuine and practical alternative to driving.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong needs an integrated public transport network that supports different journeys and communities.

The future network should include:

- direct and frequent bus corridors linking major residential areas, activity centres, stations, employment precincts, hospitals and education facilities
- Bus Rapid Transit styled services along key corridors will enable a staged approach to assess when and where light rail, or similar, could be reintroduced to Geelong
- cross-city and orbital services that allow people to travel between suburbs without always passing through central Geelong
- fast and reliable rail and coach connections to Melbourne and surrounding regional centres, including stations at Armstrong Creek Town Centre, a direct service between Werribee and Geelong, and services connecting Geelong to Bannockburn via the Western Growth Area on the existing rail as a step towards the extension of passenger services to Ballarat
- local services that connect neighbourhoods to centres, stations and frequent routes
- flexible, demand-responsive and community transport where conventional services cannot efficiently meet local needs.

The bus network offers the greatest opportunity for improvement in the short and medium term. Reform should create a frequent core network built around high-frequency corridors, direct cross-city connections and local feeder services.

Services should run more often and for longer hours. Routes should become simpler, connections with rail should improve, and new growth areas should receive services earlier.

As passenger demand grows, some corridors may need bus-priority measures, Bus Rapid Transit or further investigation of light rail. Protecting these corridors, planning suitable land uses and providing strong walking, riding and connecting bus access will support any future high-capacity transport.

A Port Phillip Bay ferry network will also play a larger role, giving people more travel options across the region and to Melbourne.

Rail will continue to provide vital regional connections. It should also become a more practical choice for local trips within Greater Geelong, providing a metro style service for residents and visitors.



SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Present ranked, evidence-based advocacy priorities.	Provide bus priority on council roads.	Deliver safe first-and-last-mile connections.
Secure state funding and service commitments.	Improve stops, interchanges and passenger access.	Provide wayfinding and bicycle parking.
Offer corridors, co-funding and supporting works.	Manage conflicts with traffic and parking	Align development and parking policy with public transport.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Advocate for more frequent, direct and reliable bus and rail services, with better coverage during evenings and weekends.	Build a frequent core network connecting major residential areas with activity centres, workplaces, health and education facilities, and railway stations.	Increase capacity and give public transport greater priority along corridors with high passenger demand.
Upgrade bus stops and interchanges, coordinate timetables more effectively, and improve walking and riding connections to public transport.	Give buses priority where congestion affects reliability, while strengthening feeder routes and cross-city connections.	Investigate and deliver higher-capacity options, such as Bus Rapid Transit or other rapid-transit solutions, where evidence supports the investment.
Advocate for early public transport in growth areas and protect the corridors that future services will need.	Increase service levels in step with population growth, employment growth and higher-density development.	Support a mature network where public transport competes effectively with driving for a substantial share of longer urban journeys.

Indicators
Access to frequent public transport
Service frequency
Service span
Public transport competitiveness
Reliability
Patronage
Mode share
Accessible stops



LAND USE, GROWTH AND ACCESS

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

Greater Geelong will guide and sequence growth so people can safely and conveniently reach jobs, education, shops, services, open spaces and public transport.

Both new and established communities will have the transport infrastructure and services they need. These connections will provide practical alternatives to driving, lower household transport costs and make better use of existing infrastructure.

WHY IT MATTERS

The distance between homes, jobs and essential services affects how far people need to go and which transport options they can realistically use.

Our Settlement Strategy sets out Greater Geelong's spatial approach to growth. It highlights development in central Geelong and established urban areas, alongside continued growth in Armstrong Creek and the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas. It also considers how to manage development across the Bellarine Peninsula and surrounding townships.

The Integrated Transport Strategy supports this settlement pattern. It identifies the infrastructure and services required to connect new and established communities.

Separating housing from employment, education and everyday services creates longer journeys and often leaves driving as the only realistic option. When public and active transport arrive after communities take shape, car-dependent habits can become expensive and difficult to change.

Central Geelong and other major activity centres must remain easy to reach as housing, employment and visitor numbers grow. Established areas offer opportunities to house more people close to existing infrastructure, railway stations and services.

New growth areas offer a different opportunity. By planning early, we can integrate public transport, walking and riding into these communities from the beginning and coordinate delivery with housing, jobs and community infrastructure.

Land use and transport planning must work together. The Settlement Strategy identifies where and how Greater Geelong will grow, while the Integrated Transport Strategy explains how people will access and connect with that growth.

The goal is not to stop people from driving. It is to avoid building communities where driving becomes the only practical choice.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will grow as a connected network of centres and communities.

More housing, jobs and services will sit close to central Geelong, activity centres, railway stations and frequent public transport corridors. This pattern will shorten many journeys and make walking, riding and public transport practical for more people.

New communities will be ready for transport from day one.

Before development begins, structure plans and precinct planning will protect future corridors for public transport, roads and active transport. Streets, paths and bus routes will then provide direct connections between homes, schools, shops, services, open spaces and workplaces.

Growth will feature:

- Early delivery of public transport and active transport infrastructure.
- Connected and accessible networks of streets and paths.
- Safe crossings over or across major roads, railway lines and waterways.
- Mixed-use centres that bring everyday needs closer to home.
- Higher-density development in places with strong access to sustainable transport.
- Coordinated delivery of housing, employment, services and infrastructure.
- Parking that reflects local access conditions and available transport choices.
- Equitable access for people of different ages, abilities and incomes.

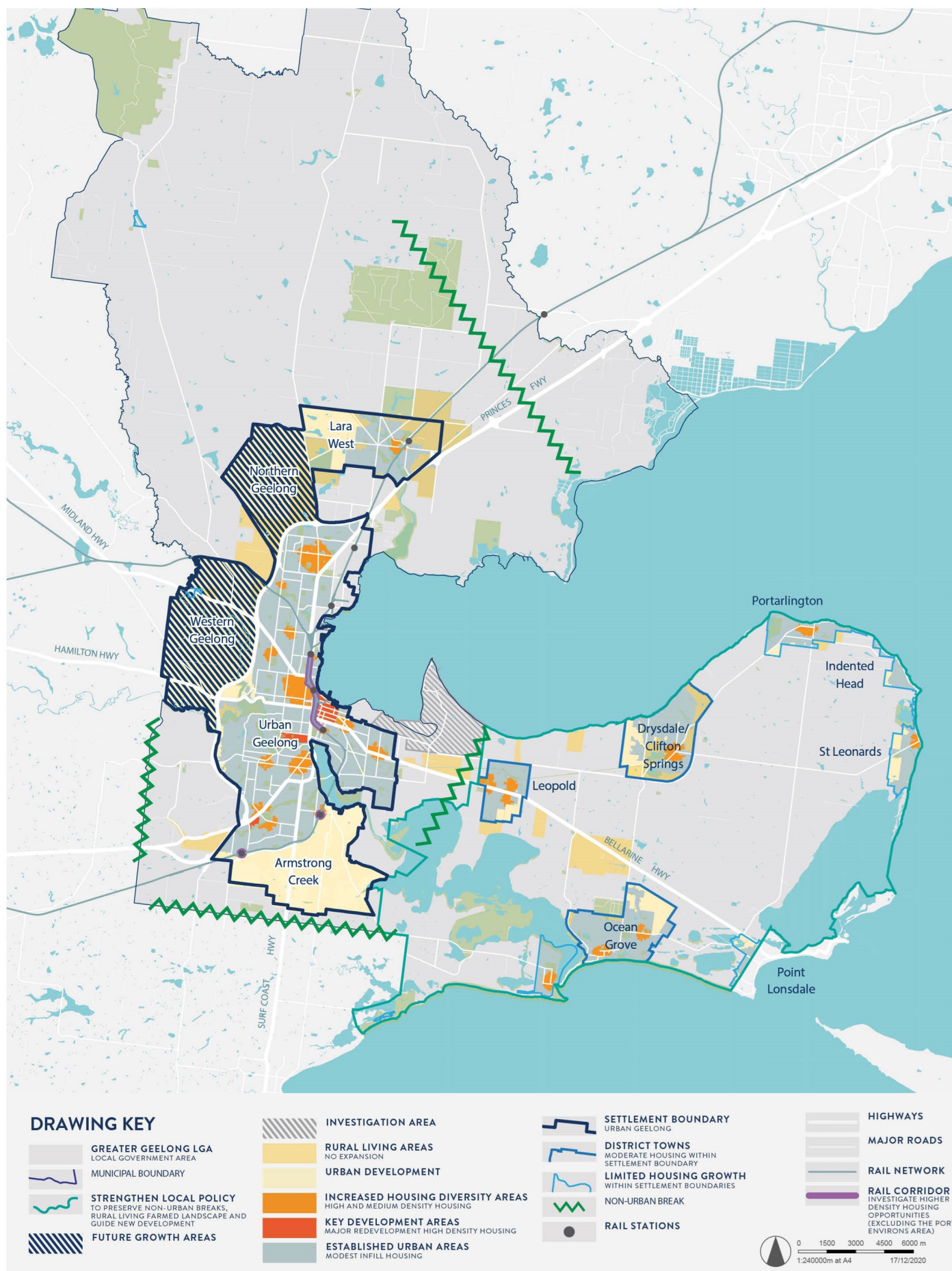




Figure 9 - Advocacy for new rail and stations to facilitate growth

SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Secure developer contributions and infrastructure agreements.	Sequence development with network capacity.	Concentrate growth near centres and public transport.
Protect future transport corridors.	Manage access and parking through planning controls.	Support mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods.
Tie growth to infrastructure commitments.	Coordinate transport and land-use decisions.	Locate daily needs closer to homes

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Protect future corridors for public transport, roads and active transport before development begins.	Locate more housing, jobs and services near activity centres, railway stations and frequent public transport corridors.	Support mature, mixed-use centres where people can meet a high proportion of their everyday needs without driving.
Require new communities to include connected streets and walking and riding networks from the outset.	Coordinate the timing of development with improvements to transport infrastructure and services.	Direct continued intensification towards locations where sustainable transport can efficiently meet additional travel demand.
Identify gaps in transport access that could limit planned growth, then advocate for early infrastructure and services.	Improve access to jobs, education, shops and services as communities grow.	Reduce average travel distances and car dependence by integrating land-use and transport patterns more closely.

Indicators
Sustainable-accessible growth
Everyday accessibility
Early transport provision
Employment accessibility
Average trip distance
Car ownership by location

ACTIVE TRANSPORT

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

A safe, connected and attractive active transport network that makes walking, wheeling, riding and scooting practical choices for short, everyday trips. This network will complement the future public transport network that is the backbone of movement across the region.

It will connect people of all ages and abilities to schools, public transport, shops, activity centres, employment, open space and community facilities. It will support healthier communities, reduce car dependence and improve access for people who do not drive.

WHY IT MATTERS

With public transport being our backbone of moving people across the city, the focus moves to ensuring active transport around our activity centres.

Many trips in Greater Geelong are short enough to be made by active transport. However, the likelihood of walking or riding falls significantly once a trip exceeds one kilometre.

Overall, 63 per cent of trips shorter than one kilometre are made by active transport, compared with only 23 per cent of trips between one and two kilometres¹. This indicates a significant opportunity to replace more short car trips where safe, direct and attractive connections are provided.

Trip length	Walking	Riding	Driving
Less than 1 km	61%	2%	36%
Between 1 and 2 km	20%	3%	75%

Missing footpaths, disconnected bicycle routes, difficult road crossings and high-speed, high-volume roads can make short journeys feel unsafe or inconvenient. These barriers particularly affect children, older people, people with disability and people who are less confident riding near traffic.

Walking and riding improve physical and mental health, reduce household transport costs and support social connection. Active transport also reduces traffic and parking demand, improves access to public transport and contributes to lower transport emissions.

Victoria's Active Transport Plan 2026 aims to make walking and riding accessible and preferred choices for everyday travel. Its focus on accessibility and inclusion, connected neighbourhoods, safe streets, health and wellbeing, and climate response provides the State policy framework for Greater Geelong's active transport network.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will have a connected network that supports complete journeys from people's homes to everyday destinations.

The future network will include:

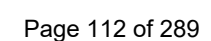
- continuous and accessible footpaths
- safe and convenient road crossings
- low-stress bicycle and micromobility routes
- quieter local streets that support safe walking and riding
- protected infrastructure on busy and higher-speed roads
- connections through open space where they provide direct and suitable transport routes
- safe access to schools, activity centres, employment areas and public transport
- secure bicycle and micromobility parking
- shade, lighting, seating and clear wayfinding.

Walking and wheeling improvements will be prioritised around local schools, public transport and destinations. Bicycle and micromobility routes will connect neighbourhoods to nearby centres and link with longer-distance strategic corridors.

The Principal Bicycle Network, Strategic Cycling Corridors and Strategic Walking Connections will guide the protection and delivery of a connected network. This will help the City and the Victorian Government coordinate investment, close missing links and ensure active transport infrastructure is incorporated into growth areas, road projects and major developments.

Routes will be designed for people of all ages, abilities and levels of confidence. The appropriate treatment will depend on traffic speed, traffic volume, demand and surrounding land use. On busy roads this will generally require physical separation, while low-speed local streets may support shared movement with appropriate traffic management.

¹ Victorian Integrated Survey of Travel and Activity (VISTA)





SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Pursue state and federal grants.	Plan and maintain priority networks.	Build safe, connected and accessible routes.
Use developer contributions.	Close gaps between council and state routes.	Provide safe crossings, shade and lighting.
Integrate projects with road and drainage renewals.	Apply consistent design and maintenance standards.	Make walking and riding suitable for all ages and abilities

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Prioritise missing links, safer crossings and local connections to schools, activity centres, bus stops, railway stations and other everyday destinations.	Connect isolated routes and facilities to create complete, low-stress networks for walking and riding.	Reallocate street space where necessary to create continuous, high-quality routes along strategic corridors.
Upgrade existing paths, crossings, lighting, shade, wayfinding and bicycle parking.	Build protected infrastructure along busier, higher-speed roads and expand networks of low-speed local streets.	Provide a mature network that allows people of most ages and abilities to make everyday journeys safely without a car.
Encourage greater use of active transport in places where walking and riding already offer practical choices.	Combine network improvements with programs that encourage more people to walk and ride.	Make active transport a standard part of street design and transport-capacity planning.

Indicators
Network completeness
Low-stress access
Destination accessibility
Walking mode share
Riding/scooting mode share
Active school travel
Usage
Safety

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL BEHAVIOURS

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

More people will make informed, practical travel choices that ease pressure on roads and parking while improving health, affordability and access.

We will help people avoid unnecessary journeys, travel outside peak periods and use active transport to reach school, university or work. People can also combine errands into one trip or choose walking, riding, shared transport and public transport when those options suit their needs.

WHY IT MATTERS

Daily travel choices shape congestion, parking demand, emissions and road safety. They also affect whether public transport and other sustainable services attract enough demand to remain viable.

Greater Geelong cannot support continued growth simply by building more roads and parking spaces. Small changes to when and how people travel can make a real difference, especially during peak periods and around schools, activity centres, major employment areas and events.

Some journeys offer clear opportunities for change. Around 28% of Greater Geelong residents live within five kilometres of their workplace, while another 25% live between five and ten kilometres away. With safe infrastructure and reliable services, walking, riding, e-bikes and public transport could provide practical alternatives for some of these trips.

School travel creates intense traffic and parking demand for short periods each day. Helping more children walk, ride, scoot or catch public transport can improve their health and independence while also reducing congestion and emissions around schools. It can also make local streets safer.

Programs alone cannot overcome unsafe infrastructure or inadequate services. People are more likely to change their travel habits when the alternatives feel safe, reliable, convenient, affordable and easy to understand. That means coordinating information, incentives and travel programs with better infrastructure, stronger services and effective parking management.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will manage travel demand to make better use of the existing transport network and support investment in sustainable transport.

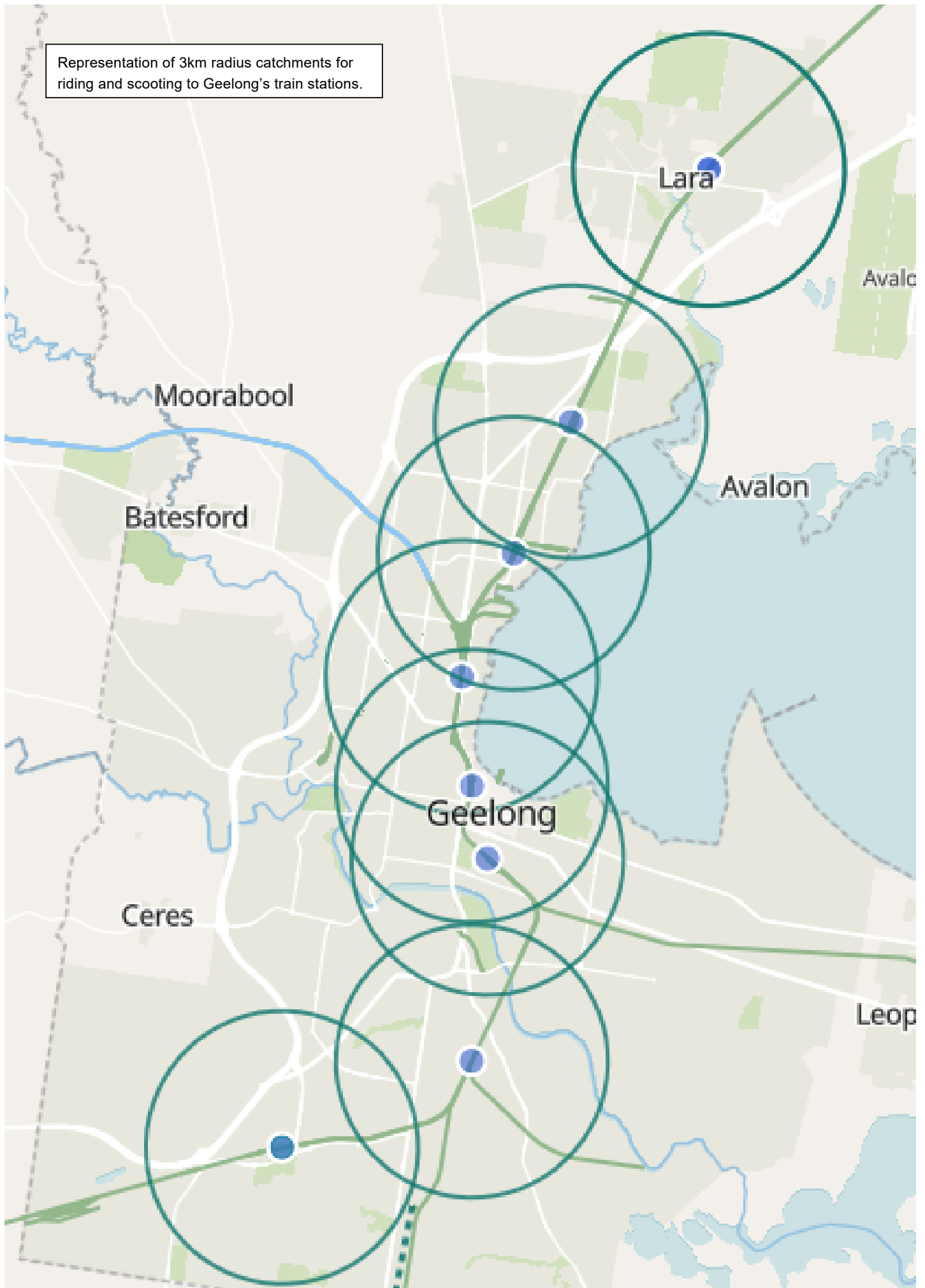
The future approach will include:

- Sustainable travel programs for schools.
- Travel plans for workplaces and major institutions.
- Clear information about walking, riding and public transport options.
- Incentives and trials that allow people to experience different ways of travelling.
- Flexible working, remote participation and off-peak travel where appropriate.
- Event transport plans that prioritise public and active transport.
- Parking policies that encourage efficient travel choices.
- Travel planning for new developments and communities.
- Targeted programs when new infrastructure or transport services begin operating.
- Data collection and evaluation to identify which measures create lasting change.

Different people have different needs. The goal is not to prevent necessary car journeys, but to make other options easier when they offer a practical choice.

Reducing discretionary car trips will free road and parking capacity for freight operators, trades, emergency services and people who need to drive.

We will lead by example. Our workforce, vehicle fleet, facilities, procurement and event planning will all support more efficient and sustainable travel.





Forty years ago, 75% of children walked or rode to school. Today, 1 in 5 children travel actively to school in Australia. Our vision is that at least 75% of children are doing so by 2050.

SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Seek grants and partner funding.	Coordinate campaigns and travel programs.	Support school and workplace travel plans.
Obtain employer, school and university contributions.	Monitor participation and mode shift.	Help people trial walking, riding and public transport.
Link programs to funded infrastructure projects.	Target programs to locations with viable alternatives.	Normalise independent school travel and multimodal commuting.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Focus behaviour-change programs on places where practical alternatives already exist or will soon become available.	Expand travel programs for schools, workplaces and major institutions as sustainable transport networks improve.	Make sustainable travel the usual choice for a substantial share of suitable everyday journeys.
Help people understand and try walking, riding, public transport and journeys that combine different forms of transport.	Coordinate travel programs with new services, infrastructure improvements and changes to parking.	Use more targeted demand-management measures to make the best use of road and parking capacity during peak periods.
Collect baseline data on travel behaviour and evaluate the results of each program.	Expand successful initiatives and stop measures that fail to create lasting change.	Make travel-behaviour programs an ongoing part of network management rather than running them as stand-alone campaigns.

Indicators
School travel mode share
Workplace travel mode share
Program participation
Sustained mode shift
Vehicle trips avoided
Household travel mode share
Council workforce travel

ROADS, STREETS AND ROAD SAFETY

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

Greater Geelong needs a safe, efficient and resilient network of roads and streets that moves people and goods while creating accessible, attractive and liveable places.

We will treat road trauma as preventable. Each street's movement and place functions will guide how we plan and manage it, including the speeds we set and the safety measures we provide for every user.

WHY IT MATTERS

Roads and streets do much more than carry traffic. They connect communities, carry public transport and freight, and provide access to homes and businesses. Many also serve as public spaces where people walk, meet, shop and spend time.

Growth will bring more journeys and place greater pressure on the network. But road space is limited. Continually widening roads is expensive, disrupts surrounding communities and can attract even more traffic. A growing city will inevitably experience some congestion, so we must focus on maintaining reliable access, improving safety and using existing infrastructure more efficiently.

One approach will not suit every street. Arterial and connector roads carry larger volumes of people, goods and essential services. Local streets serve homes and neighbourhoods, and this is where lower speeds and safe community activity matter most. Main streets and activity centres perform several roles at once. They must support movement while also providing space for walking, business access, public transport and public life.

Safety will guide every decision. Vehicle speeds, street design and the separation of different users all affect the likelihood and severity of crashes. High speeds and difficult crossings create the greatest risks for children, older people, pedestrians, riders and people with disability.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will have a clear road and street hierarchy based on Movement and Place and Safe System principles.

The future network will include:

- arterial and connector roads that reliably carry public transport, freight and longer-distance traffic including completion of the Bellarine Link
- local streets that prioritise access, lower speeds and neighbourhood safety
- activity-centre streets that support walking, business, public life and essential vehicle access
- safer intersections and crossings
- self-explaining street designs that reinforce appropriate speeds
- quieter neighbourhoods protected from inappropriate through traffic
- reliable emergency, servicing and freight access
- streets that support the Urban Forest Strategy to achieve tree canopy cover targets along priority active transport routes
- infrastructure that is resilient to heat, flooding and climate change.

Road capacity will be targeted to locations where it is required to support planned growth, address safety risks or improve public transport and freight reliability. Existing roads and streets will otherwise be managed more effectively before expansion is considered.

Local Area Traffic Management may be used to reduce speeding and discourage through traffic while maintaining access for residents, visitors, deliveries and emergency services. Measures may include raised crossings, kerb extensions, traffic calming, one-way arrangements and filtered connections that retain direct access for walking and riding.

Street design and speed limits will respond to context. Lower-speed environments will be considered around schools, activity centres, local streets and other places with high pedestrian activity, while higher-order roads will retain speed environments appropriate to their movement role.

**IMPACT SPEED (KM/H)****SURVIVAL RATE****30****90%****40****60%****50****10%**

A person hit by a car travelling at 30km/h has a **90%** chance of surviving. If they are hit at 40km/h, they have a **60%** chance of surviving. At 50km/h this drops to **10%** chance of surviving.



SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Maintain a grant-ready project pipeline.	Manage speeds, traffic and street hierarchies.	Deliver safer crossings and complete streets.
Secure road-safety and renewal funding.	Allocate road space according to movement and place.	Give priority to efficient, space-saving modes.
Coordinate council and state corridor investment.	Maintain assets and address high-risk locations.	Preserve access for freight and essential car trips.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Define the Movement and Place role of key streets and address locations with high safety risks.	Use existing road capacity more efficiently, giving greater priority to public transport, freight and high-capacity transport where appropriate.	Redesign mature corridors and activity centres to move more people safely within limited street space.
Protect essential road access while improving safety, crossings and local street environments.	Coordinate road renewals with improvements to walking, riding, public transport, accessibility, greening and public places.	Transform streets over time to reflect their mature roles in movement, access and public life.
Add road capacity selectively where planned growth, safety, freight or public transport requires it.	Manage congestion instead of trying to eliminate it everywhere by adding capacity for general traffic.	Maintain reliable access for essential traffic while shifting a greater share of journeys to more space-efficient transport.

Indicators
Fatal and serious injuries
Safe-speed compliance
Movement & Place implementation
Road renewal integration
Network reliability
Person throughput

PARKING AND KERBSIDE MANAGEMENT

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

The City will manage parking and kerbside space as valuable public assets. These spaces must support access, local businesses, public transport and freight. They should also be managed in a way that keeps key places attractive.

Parking will remain available for the people and journeys that need it. At the same time, better management, clearer information and more sustainable travel options will reduce unnecessary car trips and limit the need for additional spaces.

WHY IT MATTERS

Parking helps people reach homes, workplaces, health care, shops, community facilities and local businesses. It matters particularly to people with disability, service and delivery workers, visitors from areas with limited transport choices, and anyone making an essential or time-sensitive journey.

But kerbside space is limited. It must accommodate many competing needs, including:

- Accessible parking.
- Loading and deliveries.
- Bus stops and public transport operations.
- Passenger pick-up and drop-off.
- Taxis and rideshare services.
- Bicycle and scooter parking.
- Electric vehicle charging.
- Trees, drainage and public space.
- Outdoor dining and local business activity

Adding more parking everywhere can encourage extra car trips, worsen congestion and consume land that could otherwise support homes, businesses or public spaces. New parking facilities also cost a great deal to build, especially when they require multistorey or other structured designs. We should use existing spaces more efficiently before building more.

Parking needs also change by location, user and time of day. Busy centres need convenient short-stay spaces with regular turnover, while longer-stay parking can often sit outside the areas experiencing the greatest demand.

Different places require different solutions. Residential neighbourhoods, coastal towns, railway stations, hospitals and activity centres each face their own access and parking pressures.

Parking management cannot operate in isolation. The City must coordinate it with better public transport and safer options for walking and riding, then introduce stronger controls gradually as practical alternatives become available.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will manage parking and kerbside space precinct by precinct, using evidence to respond to local conditions. A Greater Geelong Parking Management Policy will guide this work across the municipality.

The City will tailor parking controls to local land uses, demand and access needs instead of applying one approach everywhere. Reliable data on occupancy and turnover for different areas of Greater Geelong will guide changes to time limits, prices, permits and allocations for different users as part of ongoing Movement and Place assessments.

The future approach will include:

- Priority for safety, access for people with disability, public transport, loading and essential services.
- Convenient short-stay parking in commercial areas and activity centres.
- Longer-stay parking outside the most constrained locations.
- Better use of existing off-street and underused spaces.
- Shared parking between land uses that experience demand at different times.
- Clear information that helps people find suitable parking.
- Kerbside arrangements that can change by location or time of day.
- Parking requirements that reflect local access to sustainable transport.
- Gradual reuse of parking spaces when demand falls or more valuable uses emerge.

In high-demand precincts, the City will aim to keep enough spaces available so drivers can find parking without circling excessively. If availability remains consistently low, we may strengthen controls. Where many spaces regularly sit empty, we may simplify or relax controls.

The City will consider building new parking facilities only after assessing opportunities to manage existing spaces better, share the available supply and improve alternative transport options.

Precinct or peripheral parking may suit some locations. It can consolidate demand for longer stays, if walking routes, public transport or shuttle services connect the parking area with major destinations.

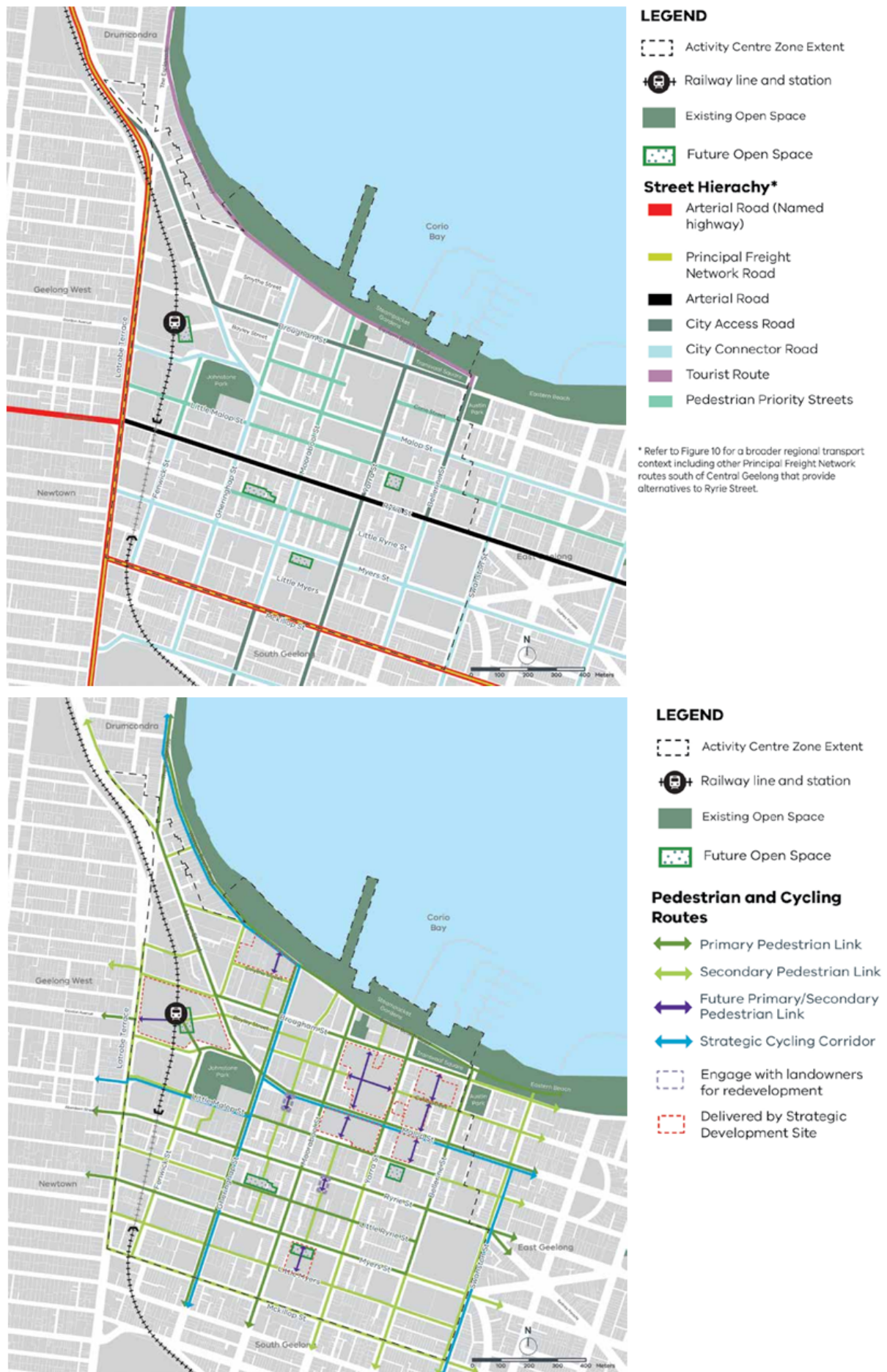


Figure 10 - Central Geelong Framework Plan Street hierarchy and active transport routes



SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Reinvest parking revenue in local access improvements.	Price and regulate parking according to demand.	Prioritise accessible parking, loading and bus stops.
Use developer contributions strategically.	Allocate kerb space between competing users.	Provide bicycle, car-share and micromobility space.
Seek partners for charging and shared-mobility facilities.	Monitor occupancy, turnover and compliance.	Use parking policy to support lower car ownership and use.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Build reliable data on parking supply, occupancy and turnover while prioritising essential access.	Strengthen time limits, pricing and allocations for different users where demand consistently approaches capacity.	Repurpose road and kerbside space over time when other uses provide greater public value than parking.
Use existing parking more efficiently before building additional spaces.	Set parking requirements that reflect local conditions and expand the shared use of existing spaces.	Reduce reliance on parking in highly accessible centres and corridors as other transport options mature.
Manage kerbside space to support accessible parking, loading, public transport and short-stay access.	Adjust kerbside allocations more flexibly between parking, loading, public transport, active travel and public-place functions.	Manage the kerb as flexible public space, directing it towards the uses that provide the greatest value as needs change.

Indicators
Parking occupancy
Turnover
Parking circulation time
Kerb allocation
Parking supply per resident/job
Sustainable accessibility versus parking provision
Revenue reinvestment

FREIGHT, SERVICING AND LOGISTICS

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

A safe, efficient and resilient freight network that supports Greater Geelong's economy while minimising impacts on communities, centres and the environment.

Businesses, industrial precincts, the Port of Geelong and other major destinations will have reliable access to regional and national markets. Deliveries, waste collection and servicing will be managed so goods can reach their destinations safely without unnecessarily affecting local streets, public transport or public spaces.

WHY IT MATTERS

Freight and logistics are essential to Greater Geelong's economy and everyday life. Businesses and households depend on the reliable movement of food, materials, equipment, parcels and waste. The network also supports manufacturing, construction, agriculture, retail, tourism and the operation of the Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport and major industrial areas.

As population, housing and employment grow, the volume and variety of freight movements will increase. Construction in growth and renewal areas will generate additional heavy-vehicle movements, while online shopping and changing business practices will increase deliveries within residential neighbourhoods and activity centres.

Heavy vehicles require safe, direct and fit-for-purpose routes. Where strategic connections are incomplete, freight may travel through central Geelong, activity centres or residential streets, creating conflicts with people walking and riding, public transport, local access and place outcomes.

At the destination, freight depends on suitable loading areas, service lanes and access arrangements. Poorly located or occupied loading spaces can cause vehicles to circulate, stop illegally or obstruct traffic, footpaths and bicycle facilities.

We must consider freight at every scale, from regional gateways and industrial corridors to the final delivery at a home or business.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will have a clearly defined freight network connecting industrial and employment precincts, the Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport, activity centres and surrounding regions.

The future network will include:

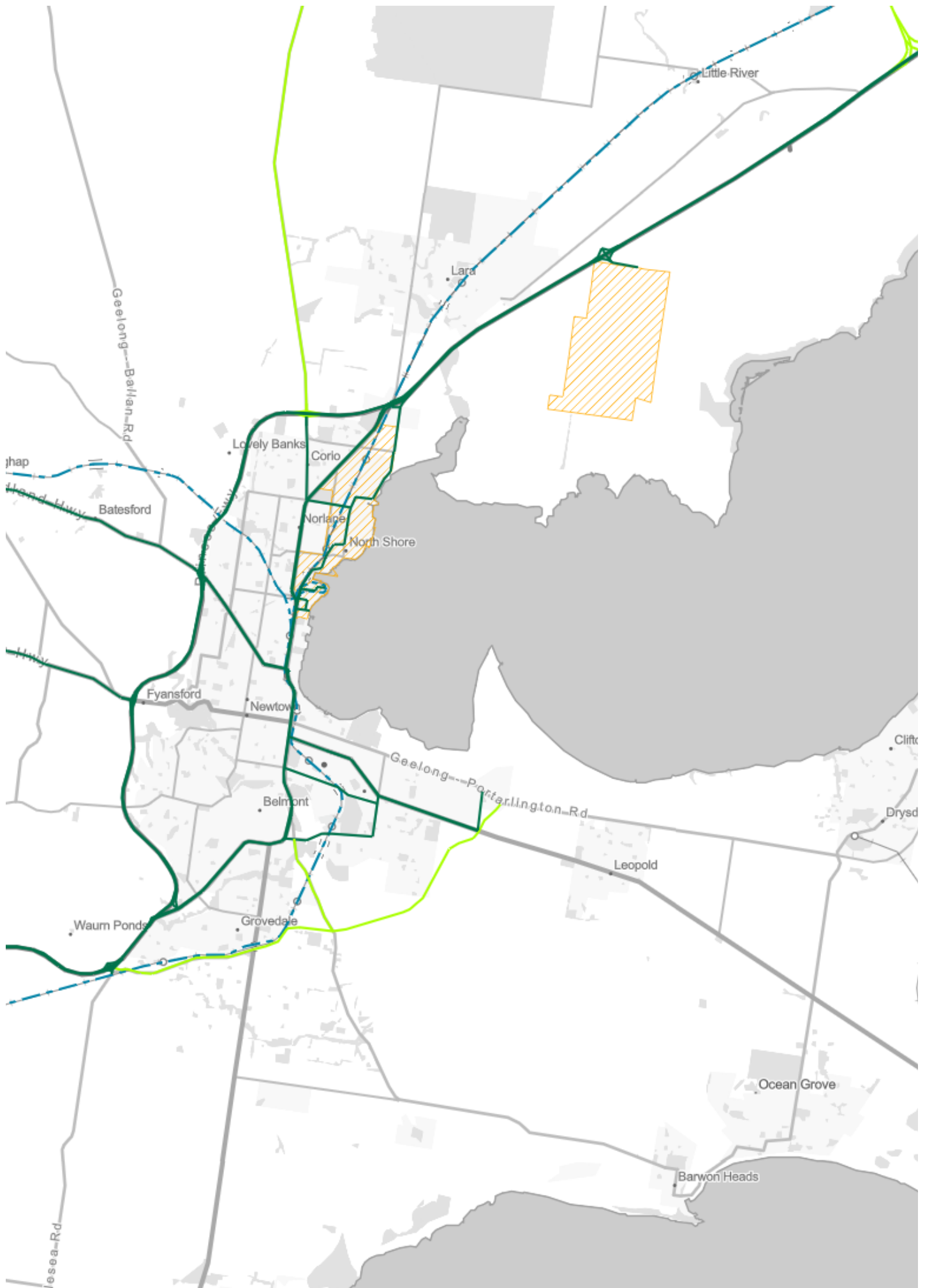
- safe and reliable strategic freight corridors
- direct connections between industrial areas, freight gateways and the regional road and rail networks
- appropriate access to current and future industrial land
- reduced unnecessary heavy-vehicle movement through central Geelong, activity centres and residential areas
- loading and servicing arrangements integrated into centres and new developments
- coordinated management of construction traffic and waste collection
- flexible kerbside space that supports deliveries at appropriate times
- increased use of low-emission vehicles and smaller delivery modes where suitable
- infrastructure and routes that are resilient to disruption and climate-related events.

The preferred freight network will direct heavy vehicles to roads suited to their size and function while maintaining the local access needed by businesses and communities.

The Bellarine Link will provide an important opportunity to improve east-west freight movement between the Geelong Ring Road and the Bellarine Peninsula and reduce unnecessary heavy-vehicle trips through central Geelong. Planning for this corridor should also support broader access, safety, public transport and environmental outcomes.

Land-use planning will protect industrial areas and freight corridors from incompatible development. New industrial, commercial and mixed-use development will provide safe and efficient loading, servicing, waste collection and vehicle access without compromising surrounding streets and public spaces.

In busy centres, smaller electric vehicles, cargo bicycles, parcel lockers and coordinated delivery arrangements may reduce congestion, emissions and pressure on loading areas.





SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Protect strategic freight routes and industrial land.	Manage freight routes and loading zones.	Support consolidated deliveries and cargo bikes.
Secure investment in access and loading facilities.	Regulate delivery times and construction access.	Provide information on suitable routes and loading areas.
Coordinate infrastructure commitments with industry.	Resolve conflicts between servicing and other street users.	Encourage low-emission freight fleets.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Protect strategic freight routes, industrial land and reliable access to loading areas.	Complete key freight connections and manage growing demand from deliveries and construction activity.	Maintain highly reliable freight access while reducing conflicts involving heavy vehicles in activity centres and sensitive areas.
Direct heavy vehicles onto suitable routes and address known freight bottlenecks.	Improve the management of loading areas and include servicing needs in plans for growing centres and new developments.	Expand consolidated, timed and lower-impact servicing arrangements where they are commercially viable.
Trial lower-impact options for last-kilometre deliveries.	Support greater use of smaller, low-emission vehicles for suitable urban deliveries.	Coordinate freight, servicing and kerbside space flexibly within mature centres.

Indicators
Freight travel-time reliability
Heavy-vehicle volumes on inappropriate routes
Loading utilisation
Freight-related safety
Strategic freight network completeness
Low-impact logistics uptake

INCLUSIVE, SHARED AND LOW-EMISSION MOBILITY

THE OUTCOME WE SEEK

A transport system that provides people of all ages, abilities, incomes and locations with safe, affordable and practical ways to travel.

Community transport, shared mobility and low-emission vehicles will complement walking, riding and public transport. This will help to close access gaps, reduce transport costs and support the transition to a lower-emission network.

WHY IT MATTERS

Not everyone can drive or use conventional public transport independently. Age, disability, health, income, caring responsibilities and where people live can affect their ability to reach employment, education, health care, shops and social activities.

These barriers are particularly significant for people living in areas with limited public transport, people travelling outside of peak periods and those requiring door-to-door assistance. Our growing and ageing population will increase the need for accessible, flexible and community-based transport.

Shared mobility can broaden travel choices without requiring every household to own multiple vehicles. Car share, bicycle and e-bike share, shared micromobility and demand-responsive services can help connect people to public transport and provide alternatives for occasional trips. However, these services must be safe, accessible, affordable and appropriately managed.

Private and commercial vehicles will continue to perform an important role, particularly where distances are long or alternatives are limited. Transitioning these vehicles to zero-emission technologies will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. This transition should complement efforts to reduce unnecessary car travel and shift more trips to walking, riding and public transport.

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

Greater Geelong will have a more inclusive range of transport options tailored to different community needs.

The future mobility system will include:

- accessible streets, stops, vehicles and passenger information
- coordinated community transport for people unable to use conventional services
- flexible and demand-responsive services where fixed-route public transport cannot effectively meet demand
- accessible taxis, rideshare and passenger transport
- car share, bicycle share, e-bike share and other shared mobility options in suitable locations
- mobility hubs that connect public transport, shared mobility, bicycle parking, charging and passenger pick-up
- convenient low-emission travel options across urban, coastal and rural communities
- appropriately located electric vehicle charging
- increasing use of zero-emission council, public transport, commercial and shared fleets
- affordable access to mobility for people who do not own a vehicle or smartphone.

Shared mobility will be targeted to locations where it improves access or reduces private vehicle ownership. Services will be integrated with public transport rather than competing with walking, riding or high-capacity services.

Electric vehicle charging will be delivered through a mix of private, commercial and public provision. Our role will focus on addressing genuine network gaps, supporting equitable access and managing the use of public land and kerbside space.





SECURE	MANAGE	ENABLE
Attract accessibility and emissions-reduction grants.	Regulate shared mobility and charging locations.	Apply universal-access principles.
Establish partnerships with mobility providers.	Manage accessible parking and pick-up areas.	Expand car share, community transport and micromobility.
Secure charging and shared-mobility investment.	Set operator performance and data requirements.	Make sustainable travel practical across ages, incomes and abilities.

Now	As We Grow	As Demand Matures
Identify transport disadvantage and accessibility gaps, then improve community transport and accessible facilities.	Expand shared mobility and flexible transport where evidence shows they can close access gaps or reduce reliance on private vehicles.	Integrate shared, accessible and low-emission transport into a mature network of connected travel options.
Define the Council's role in electric vehicle charging, shared mobility and micromobility.	Create mobility hubs at activity centres and public transport nodes while improving accessibility across the entire journey.	Ensure people can access opportunities without having to own a private vehicle.
Prioritise universal access at public transport stops, crossings, parking areas and passenger facilities.	Help Council, shared and suitable commercial fleets move towards low-emission technologies.	Use targeted services and technology to close remaining accessibility and geographic gaps.

Indicators
Transport accessibility gap
Accessible infrastructure
Community transport
Shared mobility use
Households without vehicles
Council fleet emissions
Public charging accessibility

TWO-YEAR ACTION PLAN

#	Action	Goal	Role	Timeframe
Theme 1 Public Transport				
1.1	Develop a framework for prioritising public transport advocacy projects including long-term, transformational projects such as light rail and ferry network.	Secure	Deliver	1-2 yrs
1.2	Advocate for continued investment in Geelong's rail network so that it can become a key enabler of sustainable mode shift for both trips within the municipality, towards Melbourne and other regional centres.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.a	Advocate for the planning and delivery of a new rail line and station to connect Armstrong Creek Town Centre with Marshall station.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.b	Advocate for a rapid transit connection between Torquay and Geelong.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.c	Advocate for the reactivation of passenger rail services on the Geelong to Ballarat line via Bannockburn.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.d	Advocate for the reactivation of passenger rail services between Geelong and Werribee.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.e	Advocate for redevelopment of the Geelong Railway Station precinct.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.2.f	Advocate for planning and delivery of a rail link to Avalon Airport.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.3	Advocate for a bus network that is fast, frequent, fair and meets the needs of our growing community.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
1.4	Identify local roads and intersections that would be suitable for investigation of bus-priority measures.	Secure	Deliver, Partner	1-2 yrs
1.5	Deliver a prioritised bus stop and interchange accessibility program focused on high-use locations and communities with poor access.	Enable	Deliver	Ongoing
Theme 2 Land Use, Growth and Access				
2.1	Determine our preferred future transport network by conducting transport modelling to consider different scenarios for the transport network under certain conditions.	Secure	Deliver	1-2 yrs
2.2	Reserve and protect the Clever and Creative Corridor through the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas and advocate for its delivery as a high-frequency, high-capacity bus corridor.	Enable	Deliver	Ongoing
2.3	Develop a framework to understand the accessibility of public transport and active transport to urban renewal precincts.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs
2.4	Advocate for the planning and delivery of key arterial roads to facilitate growth.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing

#	Action	Goal	Role	Timeframe
Theme 3 Active Transport				
3.1	Identify and prioritise destination catchments and missing links in active transport networks.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs
3.2	Develop a design pipeline of projects that support riding and scooting for everyday trips to take advantage of external funding sources.	Enable	Deliver, Partner	1-2 yrs
3.3	Deliver projects that support riding and scooting for everyday trips.	Enable	Deliver	Ongoing
3.4	Partner and advocate for external funding to deliver safe, connected and accessible active transport infrastructure on State-managed roads, major crossings and other priority active transport projects.	Secure	Partner, Advocate	Ongoing
Theme 4 Sustainable Travel Behaviours				
4.1	Deliver a wayfinding program for active and public transport networks connecting local destinations, stations, stops, schools and centres.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs
4.2	Establish a municipality-wide sustainable travel-to-school program combining travel-behaviour data, safe-route assessments, education and prioritised local infrastructure improvements.	Enable	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
4.3	Establish a workplace and institutional travel-planning program, including priority commuter-catchment mapping, ride-to-work initiatives and partnerships with major employers, hospitals, universities and schools.	Enable	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
4.4	Introduce travel-plan requirements and guidance for major developments and destinations and deliver targeted behaviour-change campaigns when new services, active transport routes or parking changes are introduced.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs
4.5	Develop a council staff travel plan covering commuting, business travel, flexible work, fleet use and sustainable-travel incentives.	Enable	Deliver	Ongoing
Theme 5 Roads, Streets and Road Safety				
5.1	Ensure GIS mapping of the transport network is accurate.	Manage	Deliver	1-2 yrs
5.2	Establish a Movement and Place classification vision for key roads and streets within the municipality.	Manage	Deliver	1-2 yrs
5.3	Seek funding and deliver the Safe System Network Plan	Manage	Deliver, Partner	Ongoing
5.4	Introduce a road and street renewal standard requiring every significant renewal project to assess opportunities for safety, accessibility, active transport, public transport, greening and public-realm improvements.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs

#	Action	Goal	Role	Timeframe
5.5	Implement the mode prioritisation framework, movement and place framework and urban design framework across transport projects to deliver holistic outcomes for our community.	Enable	Deliver	Ongoing
Theme 6 Parking and Kerbside Management				
6.1	Develop a Greater Geelong Parking Management Policy.	Manage	Deliver	1-2 yrs
6.2	Manage off street parking and kerbside space with a precinct-based approach supported by GIS inventory of available space, kerbside user hierarchy and strategic pricing.	Manage	Deliver	Ongoing
6.3	Require that existing supply of parking and sustainable access is optimised before considering new structured parking.	Manage	Deliver	Ongoing
6.4	Establish a parking-revenue reinvestment policy supporting access, public transport, active transport, streets and public-realm improvements.	Enable	Deliver	1-2 yrs
6.5	Review planning controls and guidance to support shared parking, location-responsive parking provision and travel-demand management in accessible locations.	Secure	Deliver, Partner	1-2 yrs
Theme 7 Freight, Servicing and Logistics				
7.1	Advocate for upgrades to strategic freight routes and intersections.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
7.1.a	Advocate for the planning and delivery of all stages of the Bellarine Link	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
7.1.b	Advocate for planning and delivery of infrastructure that supports a truck bypass for central Geelong.	Secure	Advocate	Ongoing
7.2	Trial lower-impact last-kilometre logistics, including shared loading facilities, parcel hubs, e-cargo bicycles and smaller low-emission delivery vehicles.	Enable	Partner	Ongoing
Theme 8 Inclusive, Shared and Low-Emission Mobility				
8.1	Review existing community transport provision, identify unmet needs and coordinate opportunities to expand or improve services.	Enable	Deliver, Partner	1-2 yrs
8.2	Prepare a shared mobility and micromobility framework and trial suitable mobility hubs, shared services, e-bike libraries and e-bike or e-cargo-bike initiatives.	Enable	Deliver, Partner	1-2 yrs
8.3	Prepare an electric vehicle charging strategy/framework/policy defining Council's role, site-selection principles, accessibility requirements and approach to public land.	Manage	Deliver	1-2 yrs

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING

Implementation will be integrated with the City's planning, capital works and asset-renewal processes. Progress will be reported transparently, and priorities will be adjusted as Greater Geelong grows and new evidence, funding and partnership opportunities emerge.

TURNING THE STRATEGY INTO ACTION

The Integrated Transport Strategy establishes the long-term direction for transport and land-use planning across Greater Geelong. Its delivery will require coordinated action by the City, the Victorian and Australian governments, transport operators, developers, institutions, businesses and the community.

Not every action can be delivered at once. Actions will be prioritised according to need, impact, readiness, available funding and alignment with other projects.

PRIORITISING DELIVERY

Actions and projects will be assessed consistently to ensure resources are directed to the greatest community benefit.

A high-cost project will not automatically receive priority over lower-cost operational, safety or behaviour-change measures that may deliver earlier benefits.

Prioritisation will be influenced based on the factors in Figure 11.

GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Implementation will require cooperation across council. Transport planning will be coordinated with land use, engineering, asset management, public realm, open space, economic development, community services, environment, finance and major-project delivery.

We will establish clear governance arrangements to:

- oversee delivery of the Action Plan
- coordinate projects across departments
- identify funding and partnership opportunities
- maintain alignment with the Council Plan and budget
- resolve competing movement and place priorities
- monitor risks, dependencies and delivery constraints
- coordinate advocacy to other levels of government
- review performance and recommend changes

Our role will vary by action:

- **Deliver:** The City directly funds, manages or delivers the action.
- **Partner:** The City works with other organisations to plan, fund or deliver the action.
- **Advocate:** The City seeks funding, services, infrastructure or policy change from another level of government.



Figure 11 - Factors influencing prioritisation

FUNDING AND DELIVERY PATHWAYS

Implementation will draw on a range of funding and delivery mechanisms, including those shown in Figure 12.

New infrastructure will be assessed for its ongoing operating, maintenance and renewal costs. External grants will not, on their own, justify projects that are inconsistent with strategic priorities or create unsustainable future liabilities.

We will maintain a pipeline of scoped and investment-ready projects so it can respond to funding opportunities without compromising strategic alignment.



Figure 12 - Funding and delivery mechanisms

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Monitoring will occur at three levels:

Community and transport outcomes

These measures assess whether the transport system is becoming safer, more accessible and sustainable. Some of these measures will be assessed based on externally available data whilst others will be monitored by the City's ongoing data collection and advanced transport monitoring sensors. They include the measures listed in Figure 13.

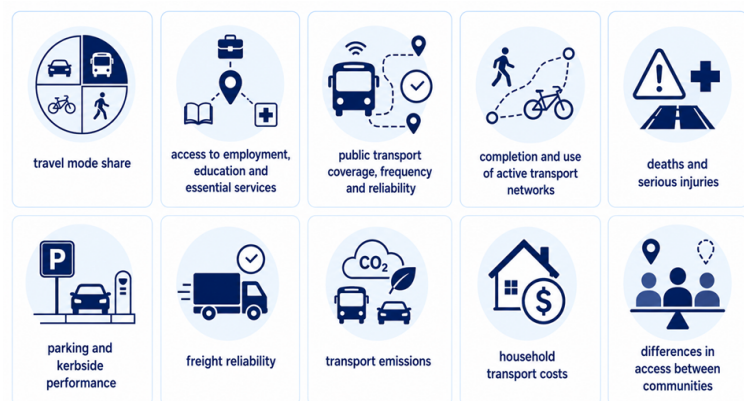


Figure 13 – Community and transport outcomes

Network and program performance

These measures assess the effectiveness of particular networks, services and programs. They include patronage, travel times, occupancy, asset condition, customer experience, participation and before-and-after project results.

Action-plan delivery

These measures assess whether the City and its partners are delivering their commitments and are shown in Figure 14.

Baselines will be established where reliable information is not currently available. Performance measures may be refined as our data capability improves.



Figure 14 - Action plan delivery

REPORTING

Progress will be reported through our integrated planning and reporting framework.

We will:

- track project, financial and delivery performance through normal corporate reporting processes
- review the Action Plan annually
- report publicly on progress against priority actions and indicators
- explain material delays, changes or actions that are no longer required
- identify new actions arising from growth, policy change, community needs or funding opportunities
- publish significant project evaluations and relevant transport data where appropriate.

Reporting will distinguish between matters directly controlled by the City and outcomes that also depend on government investment, transport operators, developers and community travel choices.

EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Major projects and programs will be evaluated across their lifecycle:

- **Before delivery:** establish the baseline, intended outcome and measure of success.
- **During planning and delivery:** monitor scope, cost, risk, engagement and emerging impacts.
- **After delivery:** assess whether the project achieved its intended transport, access, safety and place outcomes.

Pilot and temporary projects may be used to test changes before permanent investment. Successful approaches may be expanded, while measures that do not achieve their objectives will be modified or discontinued.

Monitoring will also inform decision points within the staged transition. Stronger parking management or road-space reallocation will generally progress where suitable public and active transport alternatives have been established. Where access remains inadequate, we will prioritise the infrastructure, services and advocacy needed to address the gap.

REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

The Strategy will remain a living document.

We will:

- review actions and priorities annually
- undertake a detailed review every four years, aligned with the Council Plan cycle
- update targets, baselines and priorities when significant new data becomes available
- review the Strategy earlier where major changes occur in population growth, land use, government policy, funding or transport technology
- undertake a comprehensive renewal before the end of the Strategy's ten-year horizon.

Community members, government agencies, transport operators and other stakeholders will continue to inform implementation and future reviews.

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2.5. Draft Public Tree Management Policy

Source: City Infrastructure
Executive Director: James Stirton

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement for the Draft Public Tree Management Policy (Attachment 1) to commence a period of four weeks community consultation.

Background

2. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy is an update of the Public Tree Management Policy adopted in 2022 to provide a framework for the management of trees within the City of Greater Geelong.
3. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy supports the objectives and vision of the Urban Forest Strategy 2026, the Environment Strategy 2020–2030 and the Council Plan 2025-2029.

Key Matters

4. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy has been developed to respond to the community's commitment to a cool green city that was identified in the development of the Urban Forest Strategy and the goal of achieving 30% canopy cover in our urban areas. To this end the policy is aimed at increasing canopy cover by protecting and preserving the existing tree population and ensuring successful planting opportunities for the future.
5. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy will provide consistent and clear guidance for Council and the community on the management of trees within the City of Greater Geelong.
6. This policy applies to all trees within the City of Greater Geelong located on Council owned and managed land.
7. The Policy framework applies to all Council departments, government entities, utility companies, landowners, developers and community members.
8. The Policy framework will guide decision making in the consideration of planning permits and project design and implementation across Council.
9. The changes made strengthen the policy by providing greater discretion for Council officers, stronger protections for tree health, and consideration of exceptional circumstances where tree removal is supported by appropriate medical evidence. The changes also provide clearer guidance for managing problematic tree species and processes for addressing tree root impacts on public and private infrastructure.

10. The Policy outlines when Council will plant, prune or remove a tree and what measures must be undertaken to protect and enhance the tree population. Key provisions of the policy address:
 - 10.1. Planning;
 - 10.2. Tree Planting;
 - 10.3. Tree Maintenance;
 - 10.4. Tree Protection;
 - 10.5. Tree Removal; and
 - 10.6. Tree root interactions with public and private infrastructure.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Public Tree Management Policy (Attachment 1) to be released for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
- 2. Notes a further report will be presented to Council following community consultation to formally adopt the final policy.**

Financial Sustainability

11. The City currently has a budget of \$7.4 million allocated to Tree Management.
12. There are no additional financial implications arising from the adoption of this policy. The City provides tree management and planting through the Tree Management Unit.

Community Engagement

13. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy update has been developed through consultation with key internal teams, including Tree Management, Enterprise Risk, Health and Social Equity, Sustainability and Environmental Planning, together with Councillors.
14. A separate workshop was also held with Deputy Mayor Kontelj, Cr Aitkin, and Cr Wilkinson to gather further input.
15. Engagement with the community on the Plan for Nature has also informed the development of this policy.

Social Equity and Sustainability

16. This policy will ensure fair, transparent and consistent management decisions by the Tree Management Unit.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

17. A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) has not yet been completed and will be undertaken during the community engagement phase. Findings from the assessment will inform the ongoing development and refinement of the Policy prior to its final adoption.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. This policy is consistent with the Policies and Procedures Management Policy. The City has benchmarked the provisions of this policy with policies of other Victorian Councils.
19. The planning scheme includes regulatory protection overlays for trees on private property. These include 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlays, 42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlays, 42.03 Significant Landscape overlays, 43.01 Heritage Overlays, 52.17 Native Vegetation Provision and 52.37 Canopy Trees

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

20. This report aligns with the *Council Plan 2025-29* strategic priority: Environment and Circular Economy. Public Tree Management Policy will support the protection, management and enhancement of the City's urban forest and natural environment, contributing to increased tree canopy, biodiversity, climate resilience and the sustainable management of Council's natural assets.
21. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "*Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future*" community aspiration: Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

22. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

23. The Draft Public Tree Management Policy aligns with the City's Strategic Risk Appetite Statement, reflecting a balanced approach to Community, Environment and Waste outcomes, a cautious approach to Financial and Governance risks, and a risk-averse approach to Health and Safety.
24. Without adoption of the policy, Council may face inconsistent management and decision-making practices, potentially leading to community dissatisfaction, reputational impacts, and a diminished ability to deliver on the Council Plan's commitment to providing sustainable infrastructure, services, and programs.

Environmental Sustainability

25. As the organisation and region face considerable environmental challenges, the Draft Public Tree Management Policy provides framework for best practice in managing our tree population and addressing climate change issues through greening the city.

Attachments

1. Draft Public Tree Management Policy [2.5.1 - 11 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

DRAFT PUBLIC TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

VERSION:	1
TYPE OF POLICY:	Council
APPROVER	Council
APPROVAL DATE:	XX DECEMBER 2026
REVIEW DATE:	XX DECEMBER 2030
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR CITY INFRASTRUCTURE

<i>Revision</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Authorised by:</i>
1	30 December 2025	Document published	Chief Compliance & Integrity Officer

DRAFT

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Introduction

PURPOSE

This Policy is to ensure the management of trees within City of Greater Geelong improves our urban forest, enhances canopy cover and builds connections with native vegetation. It establishes when the City will plant, prune or remove a tree and what measures must be undertaken to protect and enhance the tree population.

The planning and management of trees in accordance with this policy will give due consideration to protecting Aboriginal culture and heritage. This will include raising awareness and compliance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*. Council acknowledges that certain native trees can be important to cultural heritage places and are a significant part of the heritage of all Australians.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all City Officers in relation to all trees within the City of Greater Geelong located on Council owned and managed land.

When assessing trees, officers are to consider this Policy, relevant industry best practice, and all available internal and external services to support the best outcome for the community.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
Canopy Tree	A tree with spreading branches that is greater than 6.5 metres in height at maturity
City	The City of Greater Geelong organisation, led by the CEO.
City Officers	Includes employees, volunteers and contractors.
Construction Works	Any work carried out in connection with the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure, road or preparation of a building site and its surrounds.
Council	The City of Greater Geelong Council comprised of elected councillors and led by the Mayor.
Council owned and managed Land	Land within the City of Greater Geelong Council that is owned or managed by the City, either developed or otherwise.
Diversity	The inclusion of individual trees representing a variety of genetic family, species, and age class to build resilience from disease and ensure continuous canopy through succession.
Ecological Vegetation Class	Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) are the standard unit for classifying vegetation types in Victoria. EVCs are described through a combination of floristics, lifeforms and ecological characteristics, and through an inferred fidelity to environmental attributes.
Habitat Tree	Live or dead trees managed to provide ecological niches (microhabitats) such as cavities, bark pockets, large dead branches, cracks, sap runs, or trunk rot.
Indigenous Biodiversity	Describes the variety and diversity of all life that originates or occurs naturally in a particular place. This includes individual trees and other species that are special to Greater Geelong.
Medical Specialist	A registered medical practitioner who holds specialist registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in a recognised medical specialty relevant to the condition being assessed and who is qualified to provide an expert opinion regarding the health impacts experienced by the affected person.
Suitably qualified arborist	An arborist who holds recognised qualifications in arboriculture, appropriate to the task they are undertaking as per the appropriate legislation or Australian Standard.
Tree	A long lived woody perennial plant, with one or relatively few main stems or trunks.

Policy

The City of Greater Geelong is Victoria's second largest municipality, encompassing diverse coastal, urban, and rural landscapes. Across these communities one of Victoria's largest urban forests contributes to the liveability, character, and resilience of the municipality.

Trees are critical community infrastructure. They provide shade and cooling, improve air quality, sequester carbon, support public health and wellbeing, enhance neighbourhood amenity, and contribute to the City's climate resilience objectives. They also form the foundation of a thriving urban ecosystem, supporting biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and ecological function across the municipality.

The City recognises the significant role trees play in protecting and enhancing indigenous biodiversity while creating greener, healthier, and more sustainable communities. Through the protection, management, and expansion of its urban forest, the City is committed to increasing canopy cover, strengthening ecological resilience, and delivering lasting environmental, social, and economic benefits for current and future generations.

1. PLANNING

- 1.1. All strategic, development and construction work within the municipality must consider trees as early as possible in the design of the project to ensure the protection of existing trees and alignment with the Urban Forest Strategy and Sustainability Framework.
- 1.2. The principles that will guide construction and development within the City include:
 - 1.2.1. All design and construction work around trees must consider existing trees and their root systems to ensure the retention and protection of canopy trees in accordance with Australian Standard 4970 Protection of Trees on Development Sites.
 - 1.2.2. All subdivision applications must identify and prioritise sufficient space for canopy tree planting and include tree zones in the functional layout plans in accordance with the Code of Practice for Infrastructure in Road Reserves.
 - 1.2.3. All developments must be designed and built to accommodate a minimum of one mature canopy tree in the nature strip per residential block or every fifteen metres, regardless of the presence of a tree at the time of design and planning.
 - 1.2.4. Engineering solutions that decrease compaction and increase water availability must be adopted to improve the growing environment for trees and reduce conflicts with infrastructure.
 - 1.2.5. New buildings and associated infrastructure must be designed or located to minimise conflict with existing trees.
- 1.3. When designing streetscapes, trees that provide an appropriate scale, form and character for the neighbourhood and maximise beneficial environmental outcomes must be selected.
- 1.4. The City will build partnerships with local, state and federal organisations to help green and cool the city.

2. TREE PLANTING

- 2.1 Opportunities for planting will be proactively identified within streets and reserves to increase canopy cover across the municipality.
 - 2.1.1 Planting will prioritise shading pathways and street and park infrastructure.

- 2.1.2 Resident requests for planting will be assessed and if the site is found suitable a tree will be planted in the next available planting season.
- 2.2 The City will aim to plant at least one tree in front of every property frontage. Additional trees will be planted where there is appropriate space and site conditions.
- 2.3 To improve and increase canopy cover in accordance with the Urban Forest Strategy, the species that provides optimal canopy cover suitable for the site must be selected.
- 2.4 New plantings in reserves will not be prevented on the grounds of impeding access to a view; however, species selection and placement will be considered to frame and complement the landscape.
- 2.5 Species selection will consider the current and future environment of the site, the constraints specific to the site, the character of the neighbourhood, and diversity and resilience of the tree population.
- 2.6 All tree stock will be grown in accordance with *Australian Standard 2303:2018 Tree Stock for Landscape Use*.
- 2.7 Council will advocate for greater tree planting on private land.

3. TREE MAINTENANCE

- 3.1 Best arboricultural practice must be applied at all times to promote a healthy and safe tree population. All pruning will be undertaken by a suitably qualified arborist in accordance with *Australian Standard 4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees*.
- 3.2 Street and park tree inspections and pruning will be undertaken on a regular basis to improve tree health and safety and to provide clearances for pathways, roads, buildings and other essential infrastructure.
- 3.3 Trees will be inspected and pruned to ensure compliance with the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2026* and other relevant statutory requirements.
- 3.4 Tree/s will not be pruned to facilitate views, to provide solar access to solar panels or gardens or to reduce the impact from wildlife waste or noise.
- 3.5 The dropping of leaves, fruit or other debris by trees ordinarily will not provide the basis for the removal or pruning of a street or park tree.
- 3.6 Tree canopies will not be pruned completely clear of property boundaries unless it is required to maintain the arboricultural health or safety of the tree.
- 3.7 New technology in the field of arboriculture will be incorporated into management and maintenance techniques where appropriate.
- 3.8 Trees in areas of environmental significance will be managed to promote safety, the environmental values of the site and habitat opportunities for wildlife.
- 3.9 To protect tree health and public safety, no permanent lighting, signage, or infrastructure may be attached to or installed within trees.

4. TREE PROTECTION

- 4.1 The City will work with developers to protect as many mature trees as is feasibly possible.
- 4.2 All development applications must include all information necessary to allow a full assessment of the potential impacts on trees to be retained, on or adjacent the site.

- 4.3 All trees will be protected in accordance with *Australian Standard 4970:2025 for the Protection of Trees on Development Sites*. Developers are responsible for all costs associated with tree protection measures.
- 4.4 Council owned and managed trees are protected under the *Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2024*. The City's Local Laws team will investigate and pursue enforcement for any vandalism or unauthorised works to trees.
 - 4.4.1 Trees that do not survive works will be retained as habitat trees where appropriate or a new tree will be replanted in the same location.
- 4.5 Trees recognised in a Significant Tree Register for scientific, social, horticultural or aesthetic reasons shall be recognised, protected and retained in the landscape.
- 4.6 The City will engage with the public through consultation, publications, and community planting and education programs to raise awareness of the benefits and management of trees.

5. TREE REMOVAL

- 5.1 Trees will not be removed to facilitate views (including advertising signs), off-street parking, installation of solar panels or awnings or to reduce the impact from any bird / bat / other animal waste or noise.
- 5.2 Risk to public safety and property will take priority in tree removal decisions in emergency situations.
- 5.3 The removal of trees will only be considered when:
 - 5.3.1 removal is the only option to mitigate a high or extreme risk as determined by a city arborist; or
 - 5.3.2 the tree is dead or in decline and unlikely to recover; or
 - 5.3.3 the tree is causing damage to infrastructure or property and there is no reasonable option to otherwise resolve the issue; or
 - 5.3.4 the tree is affected by development and there is no other design option available.
- 5.4 If a person wishes to remove a tree an application must be made in writing to the City.
 - 5.4.1 Removal can only occur if the applicant agrees to pay all costs, including removal and the tree canopy contribution value calculated in accordance with Section 6 below.; or
 - 5.4.1.1 the tree/s unable to be maintained to meet *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2026* and other relevant statutory requirements; or
 - 5.4.1.2 a qualified medical specialist provides documented evidence that the specific tree is the primary cause of a severe medical condition that cannot be managed by other means and significantly impacts a resident's quality of life.
 - 5.4.1.3 the removal of trees is required to facilitate renewal of the street or reserve.
 - 5.4.2 Where a tree has been removed, and the site is suitable for replanting, a replacement tree will be established in future planting seasons.
- 5.5 In relation to the removal of trees to facilitate the development of community infrastructure on Council Owned or Managed Land, consideration will be given as to whether community engagement in accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Policy 2026-30* should be carried out.
- 5.6 Council may undertake the planned removal and replacement of a tree species that is identified as causing ongoing infrastructure impacts or disproportionately impacting adjacent residents' quality of

life. Replacement programs will generally be funded through a Special Rates and Charge Scheme and require majority support from affected residents.

6. TREE CANOPY CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 If a tree is removed to facilitate private or public works a tree canopy contribution value will be applied to the tree.
- 6.2 The tree canopy contribution value is calculated using the following methodology:
 - 6.2.1 $(\text{volume of tree canopy removed} / \text{volume of an average 5-year-old tree}) \times \text{Tree Planting and Establishment charge} = \text{tree canopy contribution Value.}$
- 6.3 All money collected through the application of tree canopy contribution values will be used to improve tree canopy cover.
- 6.4 The person or entity applying for removal of a tree/s is responsible for payment of all costs associated with the removal of the tree, including payment of the tree canopy contribution. The tree canopy contribution must be paid prior to the removal of the tree.

7. TREE ROOT INTERACTIONS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.1 All development and construction works must make allowances for the protection of Council-owned or managed trees on nature strips and reserves during the planning, design and implementation process.
- 7.2 When City tree roots are reported to be interfering with private infrastructure, investigations will be undertaken in accordance with the City's adopted risk investigation tool.
 - 7.2.1 If the investigation determines the tree root is interfering with private infrastructure the City will take action to mitigate the issue on public land.
- 7.3 It is the responsibility of the asset owner to maintain underground pipes, so they are fully sealed to prevent tree root ingress.
- 7.4 Practical solutions will be sought to reduce the risk of damage to infrastructure from public trees. Tree removal will only be considered if no practical arboricultural solution can be found.

8. NATIVE TREE MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The importance of indigenous and native tree species is recognised and the City will seek to enhance indigenous biodiversity where possible.
- 8.2 Opportunities to integrate environmental outcomes such as promotion of habitat into tree management programs will be sought.
- 8.3 Native trees will be planted in recognised indigenous biodiversity corridors and catchment areas.
- 8.4 When planting on rural roadsides species selection will consider the local Ecological Vegetation Class for appropriate species selection.
- 8.5 Coastal communities are home to significant stands of indigenous tree species. These populations will be reinforced through ongoing planting programs.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Responsible Officer monitors compliance with this policy and is responsible for reporting to Council.

The Responsible Officer will report to Council quarterly via the Council Plan Quarterly Report.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer is responsible for providing guidance on the application of this Policy.

A person who is uncertain how to comply with this policy should seek advice from this person or from their manager.

RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy

REVIEW

The City should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within four years of the Approval Date.

References

Legislation

Victoria State Government, Code of Practice for Management of Infrastructure in Road Reserves – 2018

Victoria State Government, Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations, 2026

Victoria State Government, Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Victoria State Government, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

Victoria State Government, Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, 2020

Other Documents

City of Greater Geelong, Biodiversity Strategy, 2003

City of Greater Geelong, Community Engagement Policy, 2021

City of Greater Geelong, Environment Management Strategy, 2020

City of Greater Geelong, Municipal Road Management Plan, 2025

City of Greater Geelong, Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2024

City of Greater Geelong, Stormwater Services Strategy 2020-2030, 2019

City of Greater Geelong, Sustainability Framework 2020,

City of Greater Geelong, Urban Forest Strategy, 2015

COAG standing Council on Environment and Water, Australia's Native Vegetation Framework, 2012

National Trust, Register of Significant Trees, 2014

Records Information Management Policy

Standards Australia, AS4970- 2025 Protection of trees on development sites, 2025

Standards Australia, AS4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees, 2007

Standards Australia, AS2303-2018 Tree stock for landscape use, 2018

Victoria State Government, Bioregions and EVC benchmarks, 2020

Wadawurrung People, Caring for Country, 2020

2.6. Council Plan Biannual Report – June 2026

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To present the Council Plan Biannual Report – June 2026 for consideration and noting.

Background

2. The Council Plan 2025–29 is Council’s key strategic document which identifies the outcomes and objectives Council will focus its efforts on over the four years, to ensure the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of our region.
3. The Council Plan 2025–29 is supported by an annual budget and major initiatives which detail work that is critical to deliver on the Council’s objectives and outcomes.
4. This is the second biannual report for the Council Plan 2025–29. While covering the final six months to 30 June 2026 (H2), this report reflects on overall progress across the full 2025–26 financial year (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026).

Key Matters

5. There are 31 major initiatives reported upon in the Council Plan – Biannual Report June 2026.
6. At the end of June 2026, all 31 initiatives are ‘on track’, meaning they are progressing as planned and expected to meet delivery targets.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Council Plan Biannual Report – June 2026 (Attachment 1).

Financial Sustainability

7. There are no financial implications arising from the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

8. The Council Plan 2025–29 biannual reports are prepared in consultation with Managers, Coordinators and Officers from across the organisation. The report will be made available to the community online through the City website after the Council Meeting, with the year end results appearing in the City’s annual report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

9. Our Community Plan 2025–29 recognises the importance of social equity, access and inclusion as a key priority area contributing to the long-term sustainability of the community. The biannual reports document the work the City is undertaking to improve equity, access, and inclusion for all.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

10. No Gender+ Impact Assessment was undertaken as this report is administrative in nature, providing updates on existing initiatives. No further assessment is required for the adoption of this progress report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

11. The City’s activities are guided by the Council Plan 2025–29 which was adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and implementation monitored via the quarterly and annual reports.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

12. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
 - Core and Critical Infrastructure
 - Economic Development
 - Environment and Circular Economy
 - Governance and Integrity
 - Healthy and Caring Community
 - Heritage and Culture
13. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
 - A destination that attracts local and international visitors.
 - A fast, reliable and connected transport network.
 - A leader in developing and adopting technology.
 - A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities.
 - An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.
 - Creative and diverse culture.
 - Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.
 - People feel safe wherever they are.
 - Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

14. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

15. There are no identified risks arising from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

16. As the organisation and region face considerable environmental challenges, the Council Plan 2025–29 outlines the City's priorities in addressing the issues including climate change and waste, increasing population growth and threats to local biodiversity.

Attachments

1. Council Plan Biannual Report June 2026 [2.6.1 - 22 pages]

COUNCIL PLAN

BI-ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2026



INTRODUCTION

This report provides a bi-annual update on Council's progress against the major initiatives and adopted indicators as part of our Council Plan 2025-29.

The **Council Plan 2025-2029** sets our strategic direction for the next four years and outlines how we will deliver meaningful outcomes for the City of Greater Geelong.

The plan is guided by the community's 30-year vision, *Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future*, and reflects Council's commitment to inclusive, sustainable and innovative local governance. It provides a clear framework to guide decision-making, prioritise resources and maximise the impact of Council's services, infrastructure and advocacy.

The six guiding strategic objectives are:

1	CORE AND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE - Plan, deliver, manage and optimise infrastructure across the region
2	HEALTHY AND CARING COMMUNITY - Identify, promote, advocate for, and deliver equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for our diverse communities
3	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - Lead efforts to strengthen the economy and workforce to enhance prosperity across the community
4	HERITAGE AND CULTURE - Champion Greater Geelong's unique heritage and cultural identity
5	ENVIRONMENT AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY - Protect and enhance the natural environment and surrounds
6	GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY - Commit to the highest levels of leadership, integrity, financial stewardship and meaningful community engagement

The document fits into a broader cascading framework that includes:



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

Reporting Process

Progress against **The City's 31 Council Plan Major Initiatives** have been assessed and categorised into five stages:

- COMPLETED** – Fully Delivered
- ON TRACK** – Progressing as planned and expected to meet delivery target
- DELAYED** – Behind schedule; still expected to be delivered within Council Plan
- AT RISK** – Behind schedule; unlikely to be delivered within Council Plan term
- WITHDRAWN** – No longer progressing

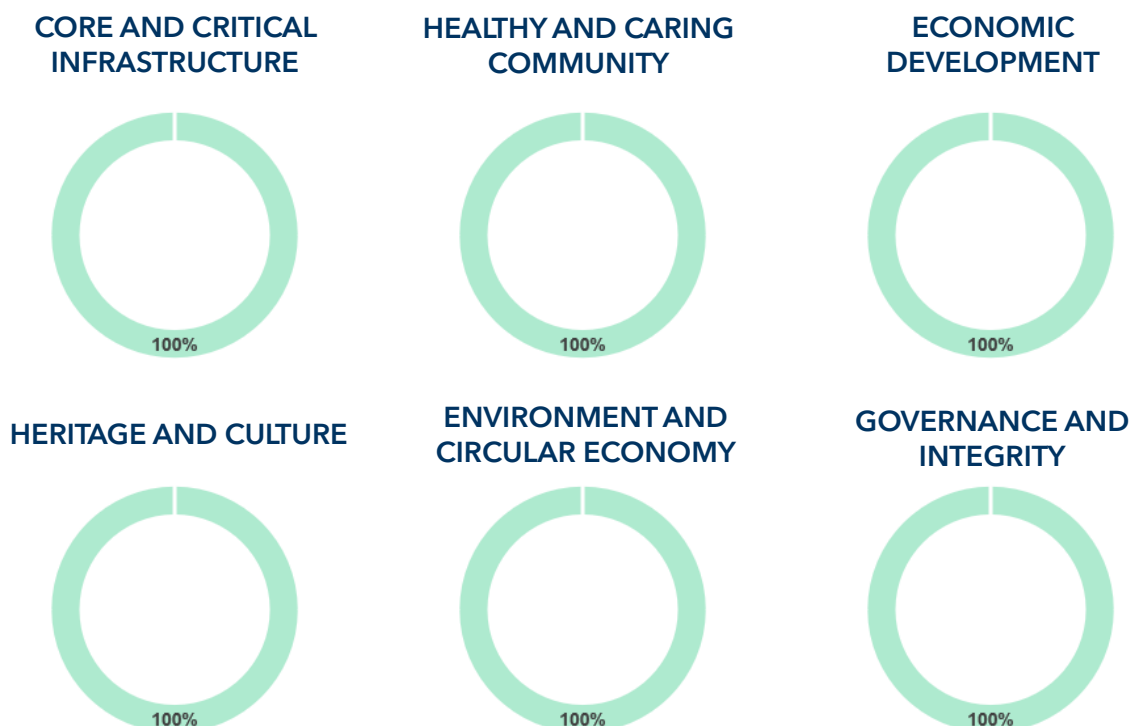
These major initiatives are aligned with the six strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan and represent the key actions Council is undertaking to achieve these objectives. Progress against each initiative is reviewed bi-annually to support transparent and accountable reporting on the delivery of the Council Plan.

The adopted indicators, which measure progress and success, have also been reviewed. Annual results for FY2025-26 have been recorded, together with an assessment of performance against each target, indicating whether results show a positive trend, negative trend, or no significant change.

Results

Based on the yearly results for the 2025-2026 financial year, the City is tracking well against the major initiatives and supporting actions committed to in the Council Plan. Overall, 100% of initiatives (31 initiatives) are on track, with none identified as at risk or delayed.

Results for each Strategic Objective are summarised below:



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Core and Critical Infrastructure: Plan, deliver, manage and optimise core and critical infrastructure across the region

Outcomes

- Responsible and sustainable growth and development.
- Community facilities and public spaces are accessible and fit for purpose.
- Multi-modal transport networks are well-connected and accessible.

Major Initiatives

1.1 Accelerate planning for housing, employment land and major infrastructure development in response to the Plan for Victoria.	<i>Planning for the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas progressed throughout the year, with key milestones achieved across several Precinct Structure Plans. Elcho Road West, Elcho Road East and Creamery Road advanced through important planning, engagement and approval phases, while work continued on the West Fyans/Fyans Street Precinct Structure Plan. The State Government also confirmed it will lead progression of the four remaining precincts in the Northern and Western Growth areas. Together, these initiatives will position several growth areas for their next stages of planning and implementation.</i>	On Track
1.2 Develop and implement the Public Realm Strategy to guide the landscape character, transport and economic outcomes of key streets.	<i>The City has continued work on the Public Realm Strategy, which will guide the future planning, design and management of key streets and public spaces across Greater Geelong. The strategy is scheduled for executive consideration early in the next financial year.</i>	On Track
1.3 Develop and commence implementation of a new Integrated Transport Strategy.	<i>The City has progressed the draft Integrated Transport Strategy in response to community engagement. A draft strategy is now ready and will soon go to Council, with community consultation on the draft to follow.</i>	On Track
1.4 Upgrade and develop community, sports, and active recreation infrastructure to enhance access and participation in local sports and activities.	<i>Significant progress was made on the delivery of community sport and recreation infrastructure across Greater Geelong. The Rippleside Park all-abilities playground was completed and opened to the community, while construction progressed on both the Ocean Grove District Ride Centre and North Bellarine Aquatic Centre Stage 2. Operational planning also advanced to support future activation and community use of these facilities.</i>	On Track
1.5 Improve and expand regional sporting facilities as part of the Regional Sports Infrastructure Program.	<i>Major sporting infrastructure projects continued to progress through the Regional Sports Infrastructure Program. Commonwealth Games legacy projects moved through key stages of delivery, and planning continued to get facilities ready for future use. All projects within the Regional Sports Infrastructure</i>	On Track

		Program will be delivered for the community by March 2027.	
1.6	Invest in flood management and mitigation initiatives across Greater Geelong.	The City continued flood management and mitigation work across Greater Geelong. Stormwater studies for Central Geelong and South Geelong are now (substantially) complete, while studies for Highton and Waurn Ponds are progressing towards completion and community engagement. A contractor has been appointed to undertake works for the High Street Drysdale culvert upgrades with the project manager working through some logistical site matters before works can progress.	On Track

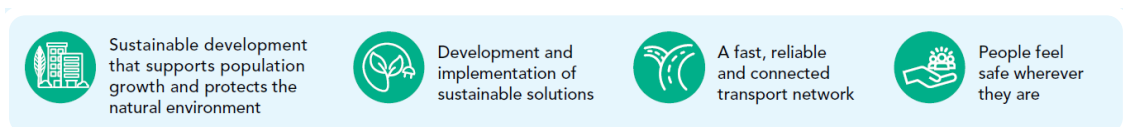
Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Increase the kilometres of transport infrastructure.	The length of pedestrian footpaths and bicycle paths per head of population.	Increase	New indicator – no baseline	32.8km new footpaths and shared paths (a 1.33% overall increase) 11.2km new roads (0.36% increase)	No Baseline Data
Asset renewal and upgrade expense compared to depreciation above 85%.	Asset renewal and upgrade expense compared to depreciation assesses whether council spending on assets is focused on purchasing new assets or renewing and upgrading existing ones.	>85%	58.47% (FY2024-25)	84.51% *Note: LGRPF Indicator. Interim result pending VAGO / ARC review.	Negative Trend Against Target
Increase the provision of open space.	Hectares of open public space (civic, community parks, sports reserves and heritage open space).	Increase	1,048.8 hectares 503 sites (June 2025)	1,058.7 hectares 509 Sites (June 2026)	Positive Trend Against Target
Increase the proportion of housing construction within existing urban areas.	Percentage of housing construction within existing urban areas.	Increase	15% (FY2024-25)	32% (FY25-26)	Positive Trend Against Target

Supporting Services



Links to Community's Aspirations



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Healthy and Caring Community: Identify, promote, advocate for, and deliver equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for our diverse communities

Outcomes

- A community that is fair, compassionate and inclusive.
- Services and facilities that enhance health and wellbeing are accessible to all.
- A community with the resources and capacity to control their health and wellbeing.

Major Initiatives

2.1	Transition the delivery of Aged Care services to a Support at Home model in response to the Commonwealth's Aged Care reforms.	<i>The transition to the Support at Home model has now been completed. The program is being delivered as business as usual, with an ongoing focus on quality, continuous improvement and compliance with Commonwealth Aged Care requirements.</i>	On Track
2.2	Develop and implement the <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-29</i> .	<i>The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–29 was developed and adopted during the year. The plan establishes the strategic framework that will guide domestic animal management priorities and service delivery over the coming four years.</i>	On Track
2.3	Implement the <i>Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-29</i> .	<i>The City continued to deliver actions under the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-29, including preparing quarterly and annual reporting. The City also supported several community initiatives promoting respect and preventing violence, including webinars, the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre's 'Collective Conversations', and Zonta Club of Geelong's '16 Days of Activism' launch, through planning support and by promoting these events across its communication channels and social media.</i>	On Track
2.4	Ensure equitable access to open space, community sport and recreation facilities and assets across Greater Geelong.	<i>Several key initiatives were progressed to support equitable access to open space, sport and recreation opportunities across Greater Geelong. The Fair Play Strategy was adopted, while the Open Space Strategy completed Stage 2 public engagement, which will be used to guide open space planning and investment decisions.</i>	On Track
2.5	Support participation of women, girls and diverse groups in community sport and recreation.	<i>The City continued to implement Fair Access actions to support participation and inclusion in community sport and recreation. Adoption of the Fair Play Strategy further strengthened the City's commitment to improving equitable access for women, girls and diverse communities.</i>	On Track

Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Maintain participation rates in City-operated community services.	<i>Participation in MCH services.</i> <i>Participation in youth development activities.</i>	Maintain	New indicator – no baseline	- Participation in MCH services: 71.61%. <i>*Note: LGRPF Indicator. Interim result pending VAGO / ARC review</i> - Youth Hubs: 3,364 - School Holiday Programs: 773 - Youth Events: 1,320 - L2P Program: 62 (number of young people who successfully attained their Probationary License) - School and Community Programs: 745	No Baseline Data
Increase utilisation of the City's swim, sport and leisure facilities.	<i>The number of visits to aquatic facilities per head of municipal population.</i>	Increase	7.72 (FY2024-25) 3.95 (H1 2024-25)	8.14 (FY2025-26) 3.92 (H1 2025-26) <i>*Note: LGRPF Indicator. Interim result pending VAGO / ARC review.</i>	Positive Trend Against Target
Increase the number of Gender+ Impact Assessments completed.	<i>Number of projects with Gender+ Impact Assessments completed.</i>	Increase	10 GIAs (for FY 2024-25) with 24 commenced for FY2025-26	20 GIAs completed with another 10 commenced	Positive Trend Against Target

Supporting Services



Positive Ageing



Pets and Animals



Health and Safety



Community Wellbeing and Development



Local Laws



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Family and Children



Leisure and Recreation



Youth Development

Links to Community's Aspirations



A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities



An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community



People feel safe wherever they are

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Economic Development: Lead efforts to strengthen our diverse economy and workforce to enhance prosperity across our community

Outcomes

- New businesses, events and investment are attracted to the region.
- Local businesses and industries are supported to thrive.
- Greater Geelong attracts, retains and develops workforce capacity and capability.
- Sufficient land supply to enable sustainable growth, business expansion and attraction.

Major Initiatives

3.1	Activate Central Geelong.	<i>Progress continued across a range of initiatives supporting activation of Central Geelong. Industry and stakeholder engagement activities were delivered, place activation and public realm improvement projects advanced, and the Geelong City Market was established. Development of the Central Geelong Action Plan also progressed, with a draft completed for internal review.</i>	On Track
3.2	Champion First Nations products and services.	<i>Initial work has begun on a Social Procurement Policy to support First Nations businesses, products and services. Further to this, the City actively promoted First Nations products and services through its cultural and retail initiatives. Recent achievements include generating approximately 10% of annual National Wool Museum Shop sales through First Nations suppliers, as well as engaging 23 First Nations individuals and three organisations across festival, exhibition, and professional development programs. The CEO is a member of the Statement of Commitment Alliance and has actively promoted and supported the development of the Geelong Aboriginal Employment Expo. The Statement of Commitment Alliance is also developing a First Nations Procurement Panel specifically for people who identify as First Nations who work and live on Wadawurrung country.</i>	On Track
3.3	Increase visitation to Greater Geelong and The Bellarine.	<i>A range of tourism initiatives were delivered throughout the year to boost visitation across Greater Geelong and The Bellarine. Our Meet Geelong team is working to leverage the opening of Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre, including bidding on significant national events and connecting local services and experiences with the delegates visiting the Centre. For leisure visitors, the region is being marketed creatively through the Curious is Calling campaign. The region continues to pursue global visitation; our international trade engagement program profiles 26 businesses as part of the destination story, connected to more than 300 travel</i>	On Track

		<i>trade decision makers in markets from the United Kingdom, Europe, the United States, Canada, China, South-East Asia and India. A full industry development program, covering mentoring, training and workshops, achieved over 90 percent satisfaction among participating businesses.</i>	
3.4	Attract, support and deliver major events across the region.	<i>The City strengthened regional collaboration across the major events sector through ongoing partnerships with key stakeholders including Visit Victoria, Kardinia Park Stadium Trust, Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre and other major venue operators. This coordinated approach has enhanced Geelong's competitiveness in attracting and supporting major events, while building a stronger pipeline of future opportunities. During 2025–26, the Geelong Major Events program supported 12 major events, generating an estimated \$47.2 million in economic impact, attracting more than 352,000 attendees and delivering over 112,000 visitor nights across the region. Significant progress was also made in securing future event content, including the recent announcement of Spilt Milk's return to Geelong and endorsement of several new major events for future delivery, providing confidence in the strength of Geelong's events pipeline and future economic benefits for the region.</i>	On Track
3.5	Support the growth of Greater Geelong businesses.	<i>The City continued to support local businesses through skills development, networking and targeted business support initiatives. A key highlight was the successful delivery of the Geelong Small Business Festival, providing businesses with access to workshops, expert advice and networking opportunities aimed at strengthening capability and resilience. The City also continued to deliver specialised business development programs supporting priority cohorts, including First Nations and multicultural businesses, helping expand participation in the local economy and improve access to business opportunities. These initiatives support the objectives of Geelong on the Rise by strengthening business capability, encouraging entrepreneurship and helping more businesses participate in and benefit from the region's economic growth.</i>	On Track
3.6	Grow Geelong's cruise tourism sector.	<i>The City continued to progress cruise tourism opportunities, working with cruise operators, maritime authorities and destination partners on future cruise calls to Portarlington and Greater Geelong. This included planning for operational readiness, coordinating with stakeholders, and early consideration of infrastructure that could support long-term growth in the region's cruise offering. While global events have affected the cruise industry, the</i>	On Track

		City delivered packaging and trade workshops in June, with another cruise trade event planned with Visit Victoria in the new financial year.	
3.7	Increase capacity and capability of Greater Geelong's workforce.	Workforce planning for the Best Start, Best Life reforms continued throughout the year, including workforce modelling, recruitment and educator support to help meet future demand for expanded kindergarten programs. The average attendance rate for 2026 was 86.9 percent. Families were also surveyed on sessional kindergarten programs and their understanding of the reforms, with early feedback showing many families are unfamiliar with flexible delivery models such as rotational and team teaching. This information will help shape program models for 2027 and 2028, and further work is underway to better inform families, educators and support services about these changes.	On Track
3.8	Ensure appropriate supply of industrial land across Greater Geelong.	The Industrial Land Supply Review continued during the year and was completed in March 2026. The review is now progressing to an Industrial Land Strategy, which will help guide future planning decisions and ensure enough industrial land is available to support the region's future jobs and economic growth.	On Track

Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Increase the economic benefit of major events funded by the City.	<i>Estimated return on investment (ROI) for major events funded by the City.</i>	Maintain overall ROI <i>*Note: Target has been updated to align with Geelong Major Events reporting</i>	56:1 ROI (FY2024-25) - Equivalent to ~\$93.5M total economic impact, or ~\$47.5M excluding Avalon Airshow	12 major events delivered - Total attendance: 379,574 - Visitor nights: 117,391 - Estimated jobs created: 308 - Combined economic impact: \$53.2M - ROI: 40.56 <i>Note: figures remain subject to formal endorsement by the GME Committee at its 14 September 2026 meeting.</i>	No Significant Change <i>*Note: baseline year includes Avalon International Airshow, results consistent when adjusted for this biennial event.</i>
Maintain the supply of employment land.	<i>Estimated years of zoned industrial land available.</i>	Maintain	13 years (June 2024) *based on zoned supply only and not future identified precincts	Based on the 2025 Industrial Land Supply Review, Greater Geelong has approximately 13	Negative Trend Against Target <i>*Note: based on projections in the</i>

			as part of the South West Geelong Employment Land Review in 2022.	years of industrial land supply at 2025, reducing to less than 10 years by 2027-28 under current development trends. The review also identifies and recognises significant future employment land opportunities, including the South West Geelong Investigation Area and other planned employment precincts, with capacity to provide more than 1,300 hectares of future employment land subject to further planning and infrastructure delivery.	<i>Industrial Land Supply Review 2025.</i>
Increase the number of businesses supported through the City's Business Concierge service.	<i>Number of businesses supported through the City's Business Concierge service.</i>	Increase	• 461 (FY2024-25)	• 424 (FY2025-26)	Negative Trend Against Target

Supporting Services



Business Services



Economic Development and Performance



Tourism

Links to Community's Aspirations



Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment



A leader in developing and adopting technology



A destination that attracts local and international visitors



A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Heritage and Culture: Champion our unique heritage and culture

Outcomes

- Increased engagement in arts, culture and heritage experiences across Greater Geelong. We are acknowledged and recognised as a leading council and organisation.
- Increased investment in our creative, cultural and sporting activity hubs.
- Greater Geelong's diverse culture is shared and celebrated.

Major Initiatives

4.1 Strengthen Geelong's artists, arts and cultural organisations and creative enterprises.	<i>The City made significant progress in strengthening Geelong's creative ecosystem through investment, infrastructure and strategic planning initiatives. Development continued on the Design Commons project following its relocation to City Hall, while Gallery Commons was established at Market Square to provide a dedicated community exhibition space supporting local artists and creative practitioners. The City also completed a comprehensive review of creative sector investment which will inform implementation of a new four-year action plan under the Geelong Arts and Cultural Strategy 2021–2031. Together, these initiatives are helping build creative capability, improve access to affordable spaces, support career development and strengthen the long-term sustainability of the region's arts and cultural sector.</i>	On Track
4.2 Celebrate Geelong's unique culture of art and design.	<i>Geelong's creative identity was further supported through major arts and cultural initiatives. Planning progressed for Geelong Design Week 2026, with 93 expressions of interest received and the program set to be finalised in coming months. Roam Geelong activities were delivered, and development of the Public Art Strategy advanced through community engagement.</i>	On Track
4.3 Protect the cultural heritage of Greater Geelong through review of the <i>Geelong Heritage Strategy</i>.	<i>Council adopted new Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines in November and approved 29 heritage assessments for new heritage places in the Planning Scheme, supporting the ongoing protection and recognition of places of cultural heritage significance across Greater Geelong.</i>	On Track

Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Increase visitation to our arts and culture facilities/venues in person and online.	Number of visitors to the following: - National Wool Museum onsite visitation - Bellarine Arts Centre - The Carousel - National Wool Museum Digital and online programs and activities	Increase	FY2024-25: - National Wool Museum: (onsite) 113,844 - The Carousel: 162,629 - Combined NWM Digital online programs and activities: 1,364,197	- Bellarine Arts Centre: 99,622 - National Wool Museum: (onsite) 140,336 - The Carousel: 121,912 - Combined NWM Digital online programs and activities: 1,414,809	Positive Trend Against Target
Maintain the number of artists, groups and organisations supported by the City (Community Grants Program).	Number of grants provided via the following grants streams: - Artists and Creatives Professional Development - Arts Projects - Clever and Creative Seed - Creative Commissions Program - Geelong Heritage	Maintain	Funded projects FY2024-25: 10 Artists and Creatives Professional Development 13 Arts Projects 9 Clever and Creative Seed 4 Creative Commissions Program 4 Geelong Heritage Total: 38	Funded projects FY2025-26 8 Artists and Creative Professional Development 11 Arts Projects 8 Creative Seed 4 Creative Commissions - Nil. Geelong Heritage (not offered, budget transferred to complete maintenance on Hitchcock Gate) Total: 31	Negative Trend Against Target
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural projects and participation.	- Number of First Nations led projects or collaborations - Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in events/projects/activities - Number of First Nations works/creations/products sold and dollar value	Increase	New indicator - no baseline	9 First Nations artists supported 2 First Nations-led creative development initiatives delivered 1 exhibition program delivered through ROAM Festival 1 First Nations-led City Projections program delivered - Event participation included 23 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and 3 organisations. ~\$50,000 worth of First Nations works and products sold.	No Baseline Data

Supporting Services



Arts, Culture
and Heritage



Events

Links to Community's Aspirations



Creativity drives
culture



A destination that
attracts local and
international visitors

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

Environment and Circular Economy: Protect and enhance our unique natural environment and surrounds

Outcomes

- Natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored.
- Significant reductions in emissions and increased community resilience to climate change impacts.
- Minimise waste and manage effective recovery of resources.

Major Initiatives

5.1 Develop and implement the Geelong Growth Areas Strategic Assessment.	<i>Preparation of the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas Strategic Assessment continued, including environmental planning, technical review and public exhibition of key documents. The final Strategic Assessment will be considered by Council at its July Council Meeting, before being submitted to the Federal Government for approval.</i>	On Track
5.2 Implementation of the Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024-26.	<i>Implementation of priority Environment Strategy actions continued throughout the year and was detailed in a Council Report tabled at the July Council Meeting (Environment Strategy Highlights Report). The Geelong Plan for Nature was also adopted by Council, and Councillors resolved to progress the draft Urban Forest Strategy to community consultation.</i>	On Track
5.3 Upgrade existing resource recovery facilities to prepare for new Food Organics and Green Organics (FOGO) and glass kerbside collection services.	<i>Work continued during the year to support future FOGO services. Progress was made on planning and design activities for key FOGO infrastructure projects, including the Point Henry decontamination line upgrade and Staceys Road organic processing facility. Planning for future glass collection services is currently not progressing, in line with the City's position to oppose the rollout of a separate glass kerbside collection service.</i>	On Track
5.4 Design, deliver, and renew resource recovery and waste recycling infrastructure for the region.	<i>Planning and design work for future resource recovery infrastructure continued during the year. Concept design for the redevelopment of the Douro Street Resource Recovery Centre is now complete, laying the groundwork for future investment and improved resource recovery outcomes.</i>	On Track

Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Decrease the volume of greenhouse gas emissions from City-managed operations.	<i>Tonnes CO₂-emissions from City-managed operations.</i>	Decrease	8,373 tonnes (2024–25) <i>Note: indicator rebased to exclude landfill emissions from our corporate emissions profile.</i>	<i>*Note: Data not available at this time and will be reported in the Annual Report.</i>	TBC
Increase the amount of hectares of natural habitat on City-managed land.	<i>Hectares of protected natural habitat on City-managed land.</i>	Increase	1,493.02 ha (June 2025)	1,493.02 ha (June 2026)	No Significant Change
Decrease the amount of (kerbside) waste produced each year per household.	<i>Tonnage of waste divided by the number of residential households.</i>	Decrease	0.45 tonnes or 451.47kg per serviced household (FY2024-25)	0.46 tonnes or 455.69kg per serviced household for FY2025-26	No Significant Change

Supporting Services



Parks and Natural Assets



Waste Management

Links to Community's Aspirations



Creativity drives culture



A destination that attracts local and international visitors



Development and implementation of sustainable solutions

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

Governance and Integrity: Commit to the highest levels of leadership, integrity, financial stewardship, and meaningful community engagement

Outcomes

- Public funds and assets are used equitably and efficiently.
- Decision making is evidence-based, transparent and strategically aligned.
- Community engagement, strong partnerships and effective advocacy delivers value and impact.

Major Initiatives

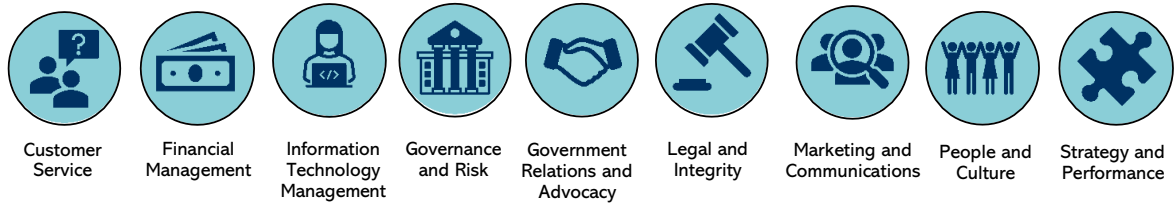
6.1	Enhance customer service experience.	<i>A range of initiatives progressed during the year to improve customer experience. Implementation of the Customer Strategy also continued, including the development of customer experience measures and reporting, with core measures such as customer satisfaction now being tracked. Planning and procurement progressed for new customer management technology and broader customer experience improvements.</i>	On Track
6.2	Strengthen the Council's long-term financial sustainability.	<i>Long-term financial sustainability remained a key focus throughout the year through adoption of the FY27 Budget and an updated Long Term Financial Plan. Financial planning initiatives support a forecast cash surplus, continued investment in infrastructure and a planned reduction in debt, strengthening the organisation's long-term financial position while maintaining delivery of essential services.</i>	On Track
6.3	Deliver the Service Review Program.	<i>The Service Review Program continues to progress. Seven reviews are now complete, each delivering improvements in efficiency, cost savings and service quality. Several more reviews are currently underway, ensuring the program continues to build momentum across Council services.</i>	On Track
6.4	Drive good governance and a strong safety culture.	<i>The City of Greater Geelong has completed all actions arising from the Municipal Monitors' Final Report. Recommendations relating to Notices of Motion, community infrastructure grants, councillor induction, governance processes, reporting and workplace culture have been implemented and embedded into business practice. The only outstanding matter relates to the review of the Governance Rules, which is contingent on the Minister for Local Government finalising the model Governance Rules for the sector.</i> <i>Delivery of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy advanced through a focus on psychological safety, prevention of occupational violence, leadership capability and governance improvement. The introduction of the</i>	On Track

		<i>City's new organisational values also played a key role in driving capability uplift programs and enhancing the employee experience, helping to strengthen culture, leadership expectations and ways of working across the organisation</i>	
6.5	Increase opportunities for community engagement and contribution in Council decision-making.	<i>The City continued to expand opportunities for community participation in decision-making through a range of engagement activities, reaching more than 8,600 people across 84 projects. Key achievements included adopting a new Community Engagement Policy and embedding deliberative engagement into the budget process, giving community members a stronger voice in shaping Council decisions.</i>	On Track

Indicators

Indicator	Calculation	Target	Baseline	Actual	Status
Delivery of capital project program.	<i>% allocated budget delivered.</i>	Deliver	FY2024-25: 67% • Budgeted - \$207.7 million • Actual - \$139.3 million	FY2025-26: 72.5% • Budgeted - \$204.3 million • Actual - \$148.1 million	Positive Trend Against Target
Increase the number of grants secured that support strategic initiatives.	<i>Value of incoming grants awarded that support strategic initiatives (aligned to strategic directions).</i>	Increase	FY2024-25 • 52 awarded \$27,936,255.48 (co-contribution \$10,182,932.49)	FY2025-26 • 40 grants awarded \$28,993,037.51 (co-contribution of \$6,015,204.30) • Despite fewer grant funding opportunities, the City improved its grant success rate from 62% to 67% in FY2025-26.	Positive Trend Against Target
Increase community engagement and participation opportunities.	<i>Number of projects available for community feedback on Have Your Say platform.</i>	Increase	58 projects (FY2024-25)	84 projects (FY2025-26)	Positive Trend Against Target

Supporting Services



Links to Community's Aspirations



CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Wurriki Nyal
137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong
8.00am – 5.00pm

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2.7. Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Year 1 2025-26 Annual Report

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To note the report which provides an overview of the actions taken to implement the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-29 in its first year.

Background

2. Council endorsed the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-29 in June 2025. This is Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan as required by the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (The Act).
3. The Act requires Councils to review their municipal public health and wellbeing plan annually, including a review of measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims.
4. The Strategy commits us to prepare an annual report for Councillors and the community which provides an update on the progress of actions and provides data collected against our measures for each health and wellbeing priority area.
5. The Act also requires the City to specify in the Strategy how it will work with other agencies undertaking public health initiatives, so the annual report also outlines our key partnerships to implement the Strategy.

Key Matters

6. The Strategy commits the City to action six health and wellbeing priority areas. The highlights for each priority area are outlined below:
 - 6.1. Priority 1: Mental Wellbeing and Social Inclusion. Key achievements in mental wellbeing and social inclusion included the establishment of the Greater Geelong Social Inclusion Action Group, delivery of the first Geelong Youth Survey, adoption of the Rainbow Action Plan 2025–29, continued support for community grants and advisory committees, and strengthened work with neighbourhood houses, community services and homelessness partners. These initiatives supported social connection, inclusion, community voice and participation, particularly for groups experiencing barriers to health and wellbeing.
 - 6.2. Priority 2: Equitable Access to Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Food. The City strengthened its leadership in equitable access to safe, healthy and sustainable food by securing VicHealth funding for a local food policy framework and action plan, progressing food system mapping with Sustain: The Australian Food Network, supporting food literacy initiatives, and embedding healthier food and drink options across Council-operated and Council-influenced settings through the Promoting CHANGE project.

- 6.3. Priority 3: Physical Activity and Active Living. In physical activity and active living, progress focused on creating safer, more inclusive and more accessible opportunities for everyday movement. Major achievements included completion of the Geelong Waterfront Masterplan, delivery of active travel initiatives through Walk, Ride, Scoot and Roll Geelong, progress on Commonwealth Games legacy sport infrastructure, and expansion of targeted inclusion programs such as the Pathways Program, Sport4All and gender-inclusive leisure programming.
- 6.4. Priority 4: Gender Equity and Prevention of Violence. Work on gender equity and prevention of violence focused on building foundations for a whole-of-City and whole-of-community approach. The City supported regional prevention partnerships, delivered family violence training for maternal and child health staff, contributed to the 16 Days of Activism campaign, developed the Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–30, supported LGBTQIA+ inclusion initiatives and delivered public art and activation projects that promote visibility, safety and gender equity.
- 6.5. Priority 5: Climate Change and Health Impacts. Climate change and health work applied stronger health and equity lens to adaptation, urban greening and community resilience. Key activity included tree planting, progress on urban forest and climate-related strategies, delivery of the Geelong Nature Festival, environment and sustainability grants, and the Nature Strip Gardens project, which demonstrated the combined health, environmental and social benefits of local greening initiatives.
- 6.6. Priority 6: Harm Minimisation. Harm minimisation activity combined prevention, enforcement, education and partnership-based responses. This included ongoing tobacco inspections and smoke-free education, support for sporting clubs considering divestment from electronic gaming machines, and regional vaping prevention work through the Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition, which reached schools, community organisations and young people across six local government areas.
7. We worked with key staff to develop case studies for each health and wellbeing priority area, showcasing the impact of key initiatives such as:
 - 7.1. Priority 1: The Social Inclusion Action Group
 - 7.2. Priority 2: The Promoting CHANGE project
 - 7.3. Priority 3: The Pathways Program
 - 7.4. Priority 4: Women in Street Art (WiSA) program
 - 7.5. Priority 5: Nature Strip Gardens
 - 7.6. Priority 6: Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition
8. The report also provides data against the indicators and measures which are part of the monitoring and evaluation framework. Baseline data against the community indicators has been provided, and these will be reviewed in 2028 to determine progress. Baseline and Year 1 data has been provided for annual measures which show the reach of our programs and services.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy Year 1 2025-26 Annual Report**

Financial Sustainability

9. There are no direct financial impacts for Council arising from the recommendations.

Community Engagement

10. The annual report will be published on the City's website and made available for the community.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. One of the key principles of the Strategy is to promote health equity and social justice. Equity considerations for each of the health and wellbeing priority areas have been outlined in the report and equity was a key consideration when identifying the case studies.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

12. A Gender+ Impact Assessment is not required because this report does not propose a new policy, service, program or infrastructure change that would directly and significantly affect people of different genders in different ways.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (section 26)*

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

14. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Healthy and Caring Community
15. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

16. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

17. This report demonstrates compliance with legal requirements under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act, thereby mitigating any associated risk.

Environmental Sustainability

18. The annual report will be published on the City's website to avoid printing.

Attachments

1. Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy - Year 1 Annual Report [2.7.1 - 58 pages]

THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2025-29

YEAR 1 ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



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We Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging. We Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

Overview

Welcome to the first annual report for the City's Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-29.

This report summarises implementation progress during the 2025–26 financial year, including actions delivered, early results, key learnings, and implications for future planning.

It covers progress across the Strategy's six priority areas, drawing on available data, case studies, and partnership activity.

This report should be read alongside the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29, relevant Council planning and reporting documents, and legislative requirements under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

Executive summary

The first year of implementation of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29 has established a strong foundation for improving health and wellbeing across Greater Geelong. During 2025–26, the City delivered significant activity across all six priority areas, with a strong focus on equity, prevention, partnership, community voice, and place-based action.

Implementation progressed through direct service delivery, strategic planning, community grants, advocacy, infrastructure planning, policy development, and cross-sector partnerships. Several actions were completed in year one, while many longer-term initiatives are underway and will continue into 2026–27.

Priority 1: Mental Wellbeing and Social Inclusion

Key achievements in mental wellbeing and social inclusion included the establishment of the Greater Geelong Social Inclusion Action Group, delivery of the first Geelong Youth Survey, adoption of the Rainbow Action Plan 2025–29, continued support for community grants and advisory committees, and strengthened work with neighbourhood houses, community services and homelessness partners. These initiatives supported social connection, inclusion, community voice and participation, particularly for groups experiencing barriers to health and wellbeing.

Priority 2: Equitable Access to Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Food

The City strengthened its leadership in equitable access to safe, healthy and sustainable food by securing VicHealth funding for a local food policy framework and action plan, progressing food system mapping with Sustain: The Australian Food Network, supporting food literacy initiatives, and embedding healthier food and drink options across City-operated and influenced settings through the Promoting CHANGE project.

Priority 3: Physical Activity and Active Living

In physical activity and active living, progress focused on creating safer, more inclusive and more accessible opportunities for everyday movement. Major achievements included completion of the Geelong Waterfront Masterplan, delivery of active travel initiatives through Walk, Ride, Scoot and Roll Geelong, progress on Commonwealth Games legacy sport infrastructure, and implementation of targeted inclusion programs such as the Pathways Program, Sport4All and gender-inclusive leisure programming.

Priority 4: Gender Equity and Prevention of Violence

Work on gender equity and prevention of violence focused on building foundations for a whole-of-City and whole-of-community approach. The City supported regional prevention partnerships, delivered family violence training for maternal and child health staff, contributed to the 16 Days of Activism campaign, developed the Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–30, supported LGBTQIA+ inclusion initiatives and delivered a public art and activation project that promoted visibility, safety and gender equity.

Priority 5: Climate Change and Health Impacts

Work in climate change applied a stronger health and equity lens to adaptation, urban greening and community resilience. Key activity included tree planting, progress on urban forest and climate-related strategies, delivery of the Geelong Nature Festival, environment and sustainability grants, and the Nature Strip Gardens project, which demonstrated the combined health, environmental and social benefits of local greening initiatives.

Priority 6: Harm Minimisation

Harm minimisation activity combined prevention, enforcement, education and partnership-based responses. This included ongoing tobacco inspections and smoke-free education, support for sporting clubs considering divestment from electronic gaming machines, and regional vaping prevention work through the Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition, which reached schools, community organisations and young people across six local government areas.

Strengths and Learnings

A major strength of year one implementation was the breadth and depth of partnerships. The City worked with community organisations, health services, schools, neighbourhood houses, sporting clubs, environment groups, state agencies, regional prevention partners and people with lived experience. These partnerships increased delivery capacity, brought specialist knowledge into implementation and supported more coordinated, equitable and place-based responses.

Year one also highlighted several implementation learnings. Progress toward community health and wellbeing outcomes requires sustained cross-Council coordination and strong governance. Many outcomes are influenced by broader social, economic and environmental conditions beyond the City's direct control, reinforcing the importance of focusing on the enabling actions Council can influence.

In 2026–27, the City will continue delivery of ongoing actions and introduce new initiatives where resources have been secured. Priorities include developing an internal annual implementation plan, strengthening monitoring and reporting, embedding equity across implementation, and preparing for the next annual report, which will include a mid-strategy review.

Working in Partnership

Partnerships across community, health, education, environment, sport and regional prevention systems strengthened implementation of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2025–26.

Key partnerships centred on collective action, place-based delivery and specialist expertise across the six priority areas. Major partnerships included:

- The Social Inclusion Action Group, bringing people with lived experience together with the City to identify barriers to connection and guide community-led responses.
- The Health and Wellbeing Partners Network, Greater Geelong Homelessness Working Group and Greater Geelong Homelessness Roundtable supported coordinated responses to complex social and health issues, including homelessness, prevention and service system advocacy.
- The City worked with Sustain: The Australian Food Network, VicHealth, Geelong FoodShare, Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative, neighbourhood houses and community learning centres to strengthen healthy food policy, map food systems coordinate food relief and increase community food literacy.
- Partnerships with Sport and Recreation Victoria, Bellarine Community Health, Northern Bay College, local schools, Run4Geelong, Barwon Health Foundation, Sport4All, and community organisations helped expand active travel, inclusive recreation and participation opportunities.
- The City worked with the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre, Respect 2040, Zonta Club of Geelong, Geelong Rainbow Inc. and schools to support prevention, awareness campaigns, workforce training, LGBTQIA+ inclusion and respectful relationships work.
- Partnerships with Rotary Clubs of Geelong and District, Ocean Grove Coast Care, community grant recipients and environment groups supported local climate resilience, nature strip gardens, urban greening, the Geelong Nature Festival and sustainability initiatives.
- The Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition was a significant regional partnership, involving councils, schools, health services, libraries, youth services and community organisations.
- Work also continued with sporting clubs considering divestment from electronic gaming machines and with libraries and maternal and child health services supporting smoke-free home environments.

The City is also a member of the Barwon Southwest Prevention Collaborative with other councils and health services in the Barwon region as part of the [Public Health Strategy for the Barwon South West Region 2023-33](#). The Collaborative enables regional approaches to shared health and wellbeing priorities and is working with the Barwon South West Public Health Unit on shared measurement indicators.

Collectively, these partnerships expanded delivery capacity, brought specialist knowledge and lived experience into implementation, and supported more coordinated, place-based and equitable action across Greater Geelong.

Geelong Botanic
Gardens, East
Geelong

PRIORITY 1: MENTAL WELLBEING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Mental wellbeing and social inclusion recognises social connection, belonging and participation as core determinants of health. In 2025–26, implementation focused on inclusive community settings, partnership-based responses and practical actions to reduce isolation and enable participation. This priority remains significant given cost-of-living pressures, social isolation, uneven access to community life and the need for safe, welcoming places that support connection.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Experiences of connection, safety and belonging are not shared evenly across the community. People experiencing social or economic disadvantage, older adults, young people, people with disability, carers, multicultural communities, LGBTQIA+ communities and people new to the region may face additional barriers to participation and inclusion.

Mental wellbeing and social inclusion are influenced by factors beyond the City's direct control, including housing stress, cost-of-living pressures, transport access, discrimination and service system capacity. Progress is therefore best demonstrated through the enabling actions Council can influence, including inclusive community settings, partnership development and support for participation.

CASE STUDY: GREATER GEELONG SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION GROUP

Overview

The Greater Geelong Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) was established in 2024 as part of the Victorian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health and Wellbeing System. It brings together people with lived experience of loneliness and social isolation to identify local barriers to connection and support community-led solutions.

Who it supports

The SIAG focuses on people and places at higher risk of loneliness and social isolation, including people with disability, young people, single parents, unpaid carers, LGBTQIA+ communities, older adults living alone, culturally diverse communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and residents in areas with higher reported loneliness.

Overall goal

The SIAG aims to improve social connection and inclusion in Greater Geelong, particularly for people at higher risk of isolation, while strengthening community belonging and supporting mental wellbeing.

What we did

In 2025–26, the SIAG focused on establishing the group, building trust and creating the conditions for community-led decision-making. Members were recruited through community expressions of interest and a loneliness forum, then supported through monthly meetings and workshops.

The group developed the Social Inclusion Investment Fund model, agreed priority areas and began building delivery partnerships. This foundation work created a safe and inclusive base before moving into project implementation.

Early feedback is positive. A member survey in 2026 found that 82 per cent reported a very or mostly positive experience, 82 per cent felt a stronger sense of belonging and 76 per cent felt the SIAG supported their mental health and wellbeing.

Early projects

With the group established and priorities set, the SIAG is now moving into delivery. Initial projects include Access Enabler Payments to reduce cost barriers to participation, advocacy on transport, infrastructure and Council services affecting isolated residents, improvements to the Greater Geelong community directory, the Belonging in Geelong project (focused on reconnection after recovery) and intergenerational programs.

Areas for development

The establishment phase also highlighted areas for further support. Around 35% of members identified the need for more assistance with project planning, navigating community systems and creating accessible meeting environments. These needs are being addressed through the program's capacity-building work.

Key learnings

A key learning is that lived experience is essential to designing responses that are trusted and grounded in community realities. However, programs alone cannot address isolation; structural barriers such as transport, cost, inaccessible facilities, digital exclusion and stigma must also be addressed.

Sustained funding, strong governance and broader engagement will be needed to maintain trust, support decision-making and ensure future priorities reflect diverse community needs.

Next steps

Next steps include strengthening capacity building for members and partners, prioritising place-based responses where loneliness is highest, and creating safer and more accessible ways for underrepresented groups to participate. Improved communications, referral pathways, trusted community connector roles and storytelling will help people find local opportunities and show what inclusion looks like in practice. With continued Victorian Government funding, the SIAG will keep supporting socially isolated residents and contribute to stronger belonging, reduced loneliness and improved wellbeing.



Figure 1: SIAG Members, Mayor Stretch Kontelj and Ella George MP, Member for Lara at the SIAG Launch, 27 April 2026

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 1.1: Provide access to initiatives and infrastructure that create opportunities for social connection

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
1.1.1	Provide a variety of community grants to support local initiatives that respond to community needs	Positive Ageing grants – In 2025–26, 37 organisations received funding through the Positive Ageing Grants program, with a total pool of \$33,199. These grants supported the 2025 Geelong Seniors Festival, including an Elvis and Marilyn Show concert for more than 400 seniors at Norlane ARC in October 2025. Planning for the 2026 Seniors Festival is underway, and successful grant recipients have been notified. Community Strengthening grants – The City invested \$203,214 across 31 community projects, with grants ranging from \$1,236 to \$10,000. Funded initiatives included community celebrations, capacity-building activities and skills development programs that foster multicultural connection, promote health and wellbeing, and support vulnerable and underrepresented community members.
1.1.2	Provide residencies and spaces to help local creatives grow and share their craft with the community	No activity in year 1.
1.1.3	In partnership with cultural industries, ensure the community have free or low-cost access to creative events and programs	The Live Music Locator launched in December 2025, giving the community one free, easy-to-use place to find upcoming gigs across the region. Live Music Locator staff presented at the Live Music Summit on 20 May 2026 to encourage venues and festivals to list events. ROAM Geelong transformed the arts and cultural precinct into a walkable program of immersive stories, installations, music and theatre. More than 300 artists delivered work across 15 venues, attracting more than 18,000 attendees.
1.1.4	Build the capability of community members to create resilient and connected communities that can address and advocate for their own needs.	The City delivered an eight-month Community Leadership Program , with 21 community members completing the program. Participants developed leadership skills, strengthened community networks and increased their confidence to contribute to local initiatives and community organisations.
1.1.5	Provide opportunities for priority population groups to have shared	Council adopted the Rainbow Action Plan 2025-29 in August 2025 and it sets out how the City will create a safe, fair and inclusive environment for LGBTQIA+ community members.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
	experiences through events, festivals, arts, and culture.	Wear it Purple Day on 29 August 2025 was celebrated with the theme “Bold Voices, Bright Futures”. This is an annual youth event which celebrates diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for local LGBTQIA+ young people. IDAHOBIT community event held on Sunday 17th May with 60 people in attendance. Pride Community Expo event held on Saturday 13th June with 150 people in attendance.
1.1.6	Establish and facilitate the Social Inclusion Action Group and associated social investment fund with both First Nations and mainstream funding streams.	The SIAG Funding Model has been established, with funding priorities and processes aligned to Department of Health program requirements. This includes the Access Enabler Payment model and targeted investment in initiatives addressing loneliness and social isolation across priority cohorts aligning with SIAG priorities. Funding decisions have been informed by SIAG priority areas and strengthened community partnerships, with a focus on increased access to existing community programs in Geelong. Delivery of projects is underway for key projects including the youth connections project, intergenerational and First Nations initiatives and a mental health/ peer support and connections projects as well as a review of the community directory. Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) – Case Study (pp. 8-9)
1.1.7	Partner with businesses, training providers, and social enterprises to create inclusive job opportunities for diverse community members, including First Nations, young people, older people, and people with disabilities.	In August 2025, the City delivered the 2025 Geelong Small Business Festival in partnership with the Geelong Chamber of Commerce. This was the 15th festival which celebrates local business, innovation and entrepreneurship. Over 70 free or low-cost events were held at Wurriki Nyal, the Sands Torquay, and online, with several satellite events across Greater Geelong.
1.1.8	Support social enterprises and inclusive hiring.	As part of the Geelong Small Business Festival, the City hosted a Corporate Partners Brunch with the theme of Diversity and Inclusion.
1.1.9	Support families to connect with other families in their local community	The City partnered with the Colman Education Foundation to deliver the <u>Our Place</u> approach at Korayn Birralelee Family Centre, co-located with Northern Bay College’s Wexford Campus. Our Place provides a holistic, place-based platform for children and families experiencing disadvantage by connecting education, health and development supports through the school setting. Maternal and child health nurses provide warm referrals on site, and an Our Place staff member attends the third session of each First Time Parents Group. Families receive information about the service and are encouraged to use Our Place drop-in supports. 180 community engagement activities have been delivered in 2025-26, with over 1300 participants.
1.1.10	Work with neighbourhood houses, libraries and community centres to provide opportunities for social connection.	After considerable consultation with all Neighbourhood House coordinators, the review of the Neighbourhood House funding agreement has been completed and adopted. Funds will be distributed as per the recommendations agreed upon.

Strategic Objective 1.2: Encourage and provide well designed and located buildings, public realm, and open spaces

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
1.2.1	Plan for housing close to transport and services in line with our Settlement Strategy.	This is an ongoing part of the City's role in planning healthy communities. The Creamery Road Precinct Structure Plan, the first PSP for the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area, has progressed through a Standing Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister for Planning. The Committee has released its report and recommendations, which will go to Council.
1.2.2	Provide and maintain social infrastructure in line with the Social Infrastructure Planning and Investment Policy.	During 2025–26, Council continued to plan, deliver and advocate for social infrastructure that supports healthy, connected and growing communities. Key achievements included progressing major community hub projects, strengthening partnerships with the Victorian Government, and undertaking strategic planning to align future infrastructure investment with community need and population growth. Significant milestones included: • Progression of the Geelong West Community Hub, with feasibility and concept planning completed and detailed design underway for the Geelong West Neighbourhood House. • Commencement of construction of the Yirrama Community Hub (in Charlemont), with completion anticipated in 2026. Set to open in January 2027. • Opening of the Biyala Community Hub (in Armstrong Creek) in January 2026, delivered in partnership with the Victorian School Building Authority, providing integrated community infrastructure for residents. This was delivered ahead of schedule to meet community demand for Free Kindergarten. • Completion and commencement of strategic needs assessments, including the Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan, Maternal and Child Health Needs Analysis, Lara Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis, and West Fyans/Fyans Street Precinct Needs Analysis, providing an evidence base for future infrastructure investment and land-use planning. The City is developing a new Public Realm Framework to guide the design and delivery of public spaces that are relevant, engaging, well located and sustainable. Phase 1 community engagement is complete, and the draft framework is scheduled for the August 2026 Council meeting. The City's new Open Space Strategy has been drafted to guide future planning, delivery and management of the open space network, including equitable access to open space, community sport, infrastructure and assets. The Strategy was released for community feedback in March and is on track for Council endorsement in September 2026.

Strategic Objective 1.3: Increase opportunity for social and affordable housing access for lower income households in the community

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
1.3.1	Use City-owned land, which is identified as surplus, for social housing.	- The procurement process to select a registered housing association (RHA) partner for the site in Purnell Rd, Corio closed in March 2026. We are currently in the selection process, and a Council decision will follow. - We are in the early stages of selecting an RHA for the site in Dean St, Belmont. An expression of interest has been drafted. - The City's property team have recommended four additional sites for social housing. We are awaiting further updates.
1.3.2	Negotiate with private developers for the inclusion of affordable housing in new private developments.	Negotiating with private developers to include social and affordable housing in new developments is ongoing. - Current planning scheme amendments which include negotiation are within Drysdale and Lara. - Creamery Rd Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) is the first PSP for the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area (NWGGA). A Standing Advisory Committee, appointed by the Minister for Planning, has recently released its report with recommendations which will go to Council. - Other PSPs are still in progress.
1.3.3	Work with our partners to coordinate responses to homelessness in the City.	The Greater Geelong Homelessness Working Group met five times in 2025 and twice in 2026 to date. The group includes 23 organisations, including services working with people experiencing homelessness and agencies with funding and policy responsibilities. The Greater Geelong Homelessness Roundtable was held in April 2026, bringing together 40 attendees from homelessness and community service organisations, State Government departments, Victoria Police, the Mayor and Councillors, and relevant Council officers to identify priorities and coordinate action to prevent and address homelessness.

Strategic objective 1.4: Support advocacy to improve the protective factors for mental wellbeing

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
1.4.1	Encourage community members from diverse backgrounds to provide advice to Council through our advisory committees and reference groups.	Members were appointed to advisory committees following an expression of interest and interview process. Inductions were held in March, and committees meet quarterly: - LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee - Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee - Women in Community Life Advisory Committee Youth Council also operates in an advisory capacity and is an important platform for young people to have a voice. During 2025–26, Youth Council delivered eight formal pieces of advice to Council, participated in four Councillor Connect Mentoring Program sessions, and contributed feedback to a range of City and community projects. Evaluation results from 2025 showed that 100 per cent of participants increased their confidence and ability to have a say on matters important to young people.
1.4.2	Advocate for the reorientation of services towards prevention	This strategic action is relevant for several services across the City. We continued to deliver youth health and wellbeing programs that promoted prevention, early intervention and positive wellbeing outcomes for young people. School and community-based initiatives increased mental health literacy, resilience, inclusion, body

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
	confidence, respectful relationship awareness and employment readiness, while Youth Hubs and drop-in programs strengthened social connection and belonging. The City also facilitated the Youth Vape Prevention Project, bringing together young people and stakeholders to reduce vaping-related harms through education and prevention initiatives. The introduction of Young Parents Connect further strengthened peer support, reduced social isolation and improved access to community supports for young parents aged 18–25. Family Services programs included: • 180 community engagement activities held at Korayn Birralee (Our Place) - based on social connectiveness • Translated resources into 7 community languages for newly arrived CALD families to understand how to access free mental health care at the Medicare Mental Health Centre • 15 Supported Playgroups across municipality servicing over 470 parents • Baby Playgroup offered at Armstrong Creek supporting new parents with young infants who may not be comfortable in a mixed aged playgroup and promoting continued connection
1.4.3 Advocate for and amplify the voices of priority population groups.	The City delivered its first Geelong Youth Survey, a comprehensive <u>youth-focused survey</u> to better understand the experiences, needs and priorities of young people aged 12–25 across Greater Geelong. More than 3,000 people participated across surveys for young people, parents and carers, community members, and education staff. The survey highlighted the top issues for young people are school or study pressures, mental health and wellbeing and the cost of living / financial stress. Young people feel moderately connected to the community, and the barriers to participation highlighted were cost, not knowing what is on and transport. The City engaged on 84 projects, including 57 related to the 'healthy and caring community' strategic direction of the Council Plan 2025–29. It offered 103 face-to-face engagement opportunities in places where people naturally spend time, including libraries, neighbourhood houses, playgrounds, events and markets. Thirty-two per cent of engagements included an in-person feedback option, compared with 68 per cent that were online only.

Strategic Objective 1.5: Support reconciliation outcomes for First Nations communities.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
1.5.1	Strengthen partnerships with Reconciliation Australia, and local First Nations organisations	We are currently working with Tiamanno Consultants to undertake stakeholder yarning and engagement activities, with findings to inform a CEO invitation letter and subsequent roundtable co-facilitated by Reconciliation Australia and local community leaders to review the Reflect RAP evaluation and guide next steps.
1.5.2	Foster a deeper appreciation of First Nations culture in the Greater Geelong community.	First Nations Mentor Project (Market Street Laneway): The laneway construction complete, and the laneway opened which enables opportunities for a public art commission. Significant obstacles may impact our ability to engage a First Nations artist to be mentored as part of this commission. National Wool Museum: • Possum Skin Cloak Commission: WALERT WALERT by Wadawurrung artist Tammy Gilson. Includes artist essay and video. Commissioned and acquired by Museum into the permanent collection. • Interwoven: Fibre Art and Fashion exhibition presented in partnership with the Australian Tapestry Workshop as part of Geelong Fashion Fortnight and Melbourne Fashion Festival. Featured four First Nations artists: Deanne Gilson, Tammy Gilson, Kait James and Corin Corcoran. Associated public programs included master classes and collections tours. • First Nations Reference Group: As part of on-going participation and support of programs across the organisation, the Museum Hosted First Nations Reference Group for a Paint & Yarn Workshop with Wadawurrung artist Billy J O'Toole. • Hosted 30 educators as part of National Visual Art Education Conference: Indigenous Art Education and decolonizing pedagogy, Facilitated by the National Gallery of Australia and Deakin University. • Retail and Commercial Offering: the Museum Shop features range of opportunities for First Nations artists, makers and businesses such as Clothing the Gap, Alperstein, Utopia, Wathaurong Glass, Murra Wolka and Kangaroo Gifts. • International Collaboration: Museum Senior Curator attended the 2026 Costume & Textile Association of New Zealand Symposium at Whanganui Regional Museum, NZ. Delivered program featuring Walert Walert possum skin cloak. This is part of a developing partnership that is planned to deliver a First Nations artist exchange program.



PRIORITY 2: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SAFE, HEALTHY, AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD

Equitable access to safe, healthy and sustainable food is a core priority of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29. In 2025–26, implementation focused on strengthening Council’s leadership role, supporting healthier food environments in Council-operated and Council-owned settings, and building partnerships to respond to food insecurity and food literacy needs. This priority remains significant as food insecurity, cost-of-living pressures and uneven access to healthy food continue to affect local communities.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Food insecurity is not experienced evenly across the community. Local evidence indicates that food insecurity has increased since 2021 and that some neighbourhoods have poorer access to healthy food outlets while being more exposed to fast food. Cost-of-living pressures are also increasing the role of affordability in shaping food choices. Year one implementation reinforced the need to direct attention to communities experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage, children and families, and others facing compounding barriers to healthy eating, while also supporting culturally appropriate and locally responsive food system solutions.

Equitable access to healthy and sustainable food is shaped by structural factors such as food prices, household income, transport, planning settings and the commercial food environment. Reporting therefore captures both long-term community indicators and the enabling actions Council can influence through policy, partnerships and service settings.

CASE STUDY: PROMOTING CHANGE

Overview

The Promoting CHANGE project helped the City take a practical, evidence-informed approach to improving food and drink environments in Council-owned and operated leisure and aquatic facilities. Led by Deakin University, the initiative tested whether structured support could increase healthier, more sustainable options while maintaining viable business outcomes.

Over three years, the City participated as a local government intervention site across selected sport and recreation facilities, contributing to implementation, monitoring and data collection. Final trial data is expected in mid-2026.

Implementation used the 4Ps framework — product, placement, price and promotion — supported by audits, photo reviews, sales data, feedback, practical tools and Communities of Practice.

What we did

A key strength has been the focus on sustainment. The City has begun embedding healthier food and drink provision into supplier arrangements, approved product lists, procurement, product approval processes, data systems and cross-department planning. Leaseholder settings will require further attention through new contracts, renewals and stronger contractual wording.

Reach and outcomes

Early achievements show that healthier food environments are feasible in recreation settings when supported by structured, evidence-based strategies. Participating facilities have improved the availability of healthier options, strengthened consistency in food provision and built organisational capability to support healthier defaults. Six-monthly data collection and analysis is helping track progress and inform continuous improvement. At Splashdown, although RED food items continue to make up a significant portion of food and beverage sales, there is a clear trend and significant movement towards healthier options. In 2024-25, RED choices made up 88 per cent of takings, which dropped to 67 per cent in 2025-26.



Figure 2: Using the Food Checker App

Challenges

Challenges included variable progress across facilities, limited contractual requirements for leaseholders, financial pressures and early reliance on individual champions before stronger systems were established.

These challenges reinforce the need to move beyond project-based effort toward a stronger systems approach. Policy, procurement, contracts and operational procedures will be essential to making healthier and more sustainable food provision a consistent expectation across Council-managed and Council-influenced settings.

Community members now have greater access to healthier options, operators have stronger tools and confidence, and Council has strengthened its leadership in healthy food environments. Early purchasing trends suggest changes to product mix, placement and promotion may be shifting choices toward healthier alternatives.

Key learnings

The key learning is that sustainable change depends on systems, not goodwill alone. Long-term impact requires clear governance, procurement settings, policy alignment, staff capability, operator engagement and regular monitoring.

Next steps

The next phase will focus on embedding and scaling changes through healthier food procurement requirements in leases, contracts and agreements; stronger governance and accountability; continued support for facility managers and leaseholders; regular outcome monitoring; and application of project learnings to additional Council sites and programs.

The City of Greater Geelong was recently recognised for sector leadership with an Aquatics and Recreation Victoria award.



Figure 3: Senior Health Promotion Officer Ella Hopgood, Deputy Mayor Cr Eddy Kontelj and Swim Sport and Leisure Project Officer Daniel Wood with the ARV Award

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 2.1: Strengthen the City's leadership on equitable access to healthy and sustainable food

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
2.1.1 Develop a policy framework and action plan that embeds equitable access to safe, healthy and sustainable food across Council operations, guided by internal governance mechanisms.	Cross-department input was provided to related strategic documents, including the Recreation Reserve Signage Policy, Catering Policy and Social and Environmental Procurement Policy, to align with equitable, healthy and sustainable food principles. Community Food System Mapping is progressing. We are working with Sustain: The Australian Food Network to identify stakeholders within the local food system. The City secured two VicHealth grants, Growing Together and Partners in Place, to resource the development of a comprehensive policy framework and action plan and strengthen the City's capacity to embed equitable access to safe, healthy and sustainable food across operations.
2.1.2 Implement healthy and sustainable food procurement practices across Council-operated services, programs and events.	Promoting CHANGE - case study (pp. 17-19) The Promoting CHANGE project intervention period has ended.
2.1.3 Partner with private and community leaseholders to adopt healthy and sustainable food procurement in Council-owned facilities and venues.	Promoting CHANGE - case study (pp. 17-19) A retail toolkit that supports maintenance of Healthy Choices implementation has been developed in partnership with the Swim Sport and Leisure team.

Strategic Action 2.2: Design built and service environments that support healthy and sustainable food access

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
2.2.1 Incorporate features into Council infrastructure that promote healthy food access (e.g. community kitchens, breastfeeding facilities, community gardens, edible landscaping).	Baseline menus and planograms (visual map for product placement on shelves to guide customer behaviour) provided for Stead Park and Armstrong Creek sporting facilities.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
2.2.2	Support early childhood services to provide nutritious meals and educate families on healthy food choices.	All childcare services offer breakfast as part of their normal program. 3 kindergartens (Norlane 280, Korayn Birralee in Corio 372, and Whittington 20) offered breakfast programs for a total of 672 children across 40 weeks. Participation in kindergarten breakfast programs has increased significantly in Norlane and Corio.
2.2.3	Promote breastfeeding and healthy eating from infancy.	The City's Feeding Support Service (FSS) delivers measurable improvements in infant feeding outcomes by sustaining breastfeeding, preventing escalation of feeding difficulties and reducing stress and inequity during the early post-natal period. It also promotes food security by reducing the reliance on expensive baby formula and supporting families who are vulnerable to early breastfeeding cessation. From September 2025, this service changed to an appointment only service, which has improved client satisfaction and has directly influenced positive breastfeeding trajectories that may have otherwise ended prematurely. During 2025-26 there have been 659 clients attending FSS across three centres (in Norlane, Barwon Heads and Highton). <i>Parent, 4-week-old infant - "If I didn't get this service, I most likely would have given formula."</i> In February 2026, the City endorsed the Breastfeeding is Welcome Everywhere (BWE) initiative and is progressing to register Council-owned buildings and leisure centres as recognised BWE locations. Creating supportive, inclusive environments for breastfeeding parents reduces barriers to participation in community life and supports early childhood development. Our recognised facilities will be listed on the Australian Breastfeeding Association's national BWE map, increasing visibility of Council's commitment to inclusive, family-friendly public spaces.

Strategic Action 2.3: Enable collective action to build a healthy, sustainable and fair local food system

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
2.3.1	Build and maintain partnerships to strengthen the local food system through a collective impact approach.	Stakeholder interviews and a Community Food System Snapshot, delivered with Sustain: The Australian Food Network, are strengthening shared understanding of local assets, gaps and priorities. This work supported two successful VicHealth submissions: Growing Together Geelong (\$150,000 over three years) and Partners in Place (\$500,000 over five years), both with strong cross-sector partnerships and significant in-kind commitments.
2.3.2	Strengthen the capacity and coordination of the food relief sector.	The City continues to support Geelong FoodShare (formerly Geelong Food Relief Centre) to address food insecurity. Geelong FoodShare participated in the City's food system mapping with Sustain.
2.3.3	Support community-led initiatives that address food insecurity and build food literacy.	Through Community Strengthening grants, the City funded Grovedale Neighbourhood House to deliver cooking courses that build skills for preparing healthy, affordable meals, and Leopold Community and Learning Centre to deliver seasonal cooking workshops focused on healthy eating, food security and community connection.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
2.3.4	Collaborate with Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative to support access to culturally appropriate, healthy food and strengthen food knowledge systems	Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative was an important partner in securing VicHealth Partners in Place funding. This formal partnership will support access to culturally appropriate food over the next two years, with an option to extend for a further three years.

Barwon River,
Belmont



PRIORITY 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE LIVING

Physical activity and active living reflects the City's role in shaping places, partnerships and programs that make everyday movement easier, safer and more inclusive. In 2025–26, implementation focused on safe active travel, improved local access and collaboration across planning, health promotion and community partners. The continuation of Kids Active Travel work provided a strong foundation for promoting walking, riding and scooting for children and families, and for testing approaches that can be scaled across Greater Geelong.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

An equity lens has been central to active living work this year. School-based active travel initiatives reduce barriers by embedding movement into daily routines, while practical supports help schools and communities respond to barriers such as road safety, distance, infrastructure, confidence, time pressure and limited capacity. Active living outcomes are strongest when planning, infrastructure, engagement and health promotion are connected.

CASE STUDY: PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Overview

The Swim, Sport and Leisure Pathways Program improves equitable access to aquatic, leisure and recreation facilities for community members experiencing financial hardship and other participation barriers. The program responds to financial barriers and inequities identified through community feedback, particularly in Geelong's northern suburbs.



Figure 4: Viewing the Pathways Program information folder

Program aims

The program aims to improve health, wellbeing and social inclusion by:

- reducing financial barriers to participation in aquatic and leisure services.
- increasing engagement from underrepresented and disadvantaged community groups.
- strengthening partnerships with trusted community health and support agencies; and
- supporting longer-term behaviour change through structured, supported facility access.

What we did

The program uses a referral-based model with trusted partners, including Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, Barwon Health and Meli, to identify people who would benefit most from subsidised access and support.

The City funds subsidised three-month memberships, multi-visit swim passes, essential equipment and program coordination. Participants use standard facility systems and services, helping maintain dignity, reduce stigma and support belonging.

“The Pathways Program is helping community members build confidence and skills, strengthen relationships, and feel a greater sense of connection and belonging in their community. The program is also creating opportunities for some stronger family connection. Time spent together at the pool has supported families to build new routines, share positive experiences, and reconnect in ways that feel manageable and enjoyable.” (Meli)

Reach and outcomes

During the mid-2024 pilot, 128 referrals were processed, 126 applications were approved and 89 participants converted to active memberships — a 70.6 per cent referral-to-membership conversion rate. More than 130 essential retail items were also funded.

Evaluation showed the program supported outcomes beyond facility access. Referral motivations and participant goals commonly related to mental health, physical wellbeing, rehabilitation, chronic pain management, water confidence, family connection, reduced social isolation and healthier lifestyle habits.

Participant goals aligned strongly with the Personal Wellbeing Index. The most common goal was improving physical health and wellbeing, followed by mental wellbeing, confidence, family connection and reduced social isolation.

The pilot showed that leisure services can contribute directly to preventative health, social inclusion and community connection. The model is well placed to grow, with future efforts focused on expanding reach, increasing impact and strengthening community partnerships.

In 2025–26, the program supported 189 people through 139 memberships, 38 multi-visit passes and more than \$5,700 in retail goods. A new 12-week Learn to Swim referral initiative for children was also trialled. Personal Wellbeing Index data will again be collected in 2026–27 to demonstrate impact and support sustainability.

Innovation and learnings

The program's innovation is embedding targeted social impact into a traditionally transactional service model. Rather than offering generic discounts, it uses a structured referral model that aligns funding, partnerships and service delivery to measurable community outcomes.

Its controlled referral system ensures subsidised access is strategically allocated to people identified by health and community professionals as most in need, creating an accountable pathway into participation.

The model reduces stigma by enabling participants to use the same spaces, systems and services as other members.

A modest investment by the City has generated multi-layered outcomes by combining memberships, casual access, essential items and coordination support within one integrated model.

The City of Greater Geelong's Pathways Program was recently nominated for the 2026 Aquatics and Recreation Victoria Innovative Program of the Year.

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 3.1: Design liveable, walkable neighbourhoods that promote active living.

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
3.1.1 Invest in and upgrade infrastructure to promote active living for all ages and abilities.	Construction is underway of the following Commonwealth Games Legacy Projects as part of the Regional Sports Infrastructure Program. All projects are tracking well, with the following proposed completion dates: - Stead Park Hockey redevelopment – 30 September 2026 - Armstrong Creek Indoor Sports Centre – 1 September 2026 - Waurm Ponds Indoor Sports Centre – 23 March 2027
3.1.2 Promote and encourage safe, active travel by providing appropriate infrastructure and facilities, and connecting residential areas to key destinations.	Following a successful partnership with Bellarine Community Health to implement active travel initiatives with three Bellarine primary schools, the City received a second round of Sport and Recreation Victoria funding for the Kids Active Travel project, Walk, Ride, Scoot and Roll Geelong. The project is working with four Northern Bay College primary school campuses in Norlane and Corio. Draft active travel route maps have been developed for each campus, school gate consultations have been held, and a digital active travel toolkit for all Greater Geelong primary schools is underway. The project is funded until 2027. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy is due to be released for community feedback in September. We have been advocating for improvements to the bus network, and as a result, a new service will be delivered on the Bellarine. Advocacy is ongoing.
3.1.3 Increase opportunities for passive recreation and incidental exercise in our streetscapes and open spaces.	The Geelong Waterfront Masterplan has been completed. It sets out design principles that respond to environmental challenges, community aspirations and economic opportunities, ensuring the waterfront remains connected, inclusive and vibrant. Community input highlighted several priorities that shaped the draft Master Plan. Leisure and recreation were central, with requests for improved walking and cycling infrastructure, additional swimming opportunities, outdoor physical activity spaces, and enhanced boating facilities. Key objectives that align with this Strategy include: 3.1 Connectivity and movement – promoting walking and cycling, increased public transport access and green transport options 3.2 Environmental Protection, Climate Adaptation and Ecology – increasing tree canopy coverage throughout the waterfront 3.4 Place Activation, Liveliness and Vibrancy – ensuring public access to the waterfront and connection with the natural environment as well as enhancing physical connections to the water supporting activities such as swimming, boating, kayaking and fishing The masterplan provides a framework to prioritise proposals, guide Council budgets and support external funding, grants and partnerships. Delivering the masterplan will be a long-term undertaking. Greening and activation have guided the scope and the sequencing of initiatives. Priority active living proposals include the <i>Wadawurrung Cultural Walk</i>, <i>Central Swimming Zone</i> and <i>Eastern Beach Playground and Outdoor Gym</i>.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
		The City's new Open Space Strategy has been drafted which will guide future planning, delivery and management of the City's open space network, ensuring equity of access to open space, community sport and infrastructure facilities and assets across Greater Geelong. The Strategy was released for community feedback in March and is on track for adoption by Council in September 2026.
3.1.4	Encourage a diversity of housing close to everyday needs	This is an ongoing part of our role in planning healthy communities. No specific activity in Year 1.

Objective 3.2: Increase and promote opportunities for active living

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
3.2.1	Design play spaces and programs that encourage physical activity for children of all abilities.	The City is redesigning Rosewall Park, behind Rosewall Community Centre in Corio. The sale of adjoining land by Council will create opportunities for reserve improvements in the future. Community engagement throughout July and August 2025 aimed to understand the community's aspirations for the future of Rosewall Park, and the feedback gathered will help inform a concept plan for future upgrade works. An engagement report was released in September 2025. Overarching themes were safety, accessibility, inclusivity and environmental care. Key findings from the consultation were: - the community wants a multi-generational space that caters to toddlers, teens, and adults alike. Popular ideas included fitness equipment, public toilets, BMX or skate facilities, and conversation hammocks for older kids. - There was a strong push for environmental enhancements such as more trees, native flora, and biodiversity friendly landscaping. - Maintenance issues like mowing, broken glass hazards, and rubbish dumping were frequently cited as barriers to park use.
3.2.2	Support major sporting and community events that encourage community participation	The City successfully partnered with Run4Geelong on 9 November. The City and Barwon Health Foundation set a target of 6,000 entrants, which was exceeded with 6,750 entrants raising \$323,000.

Strategic Objective 3.3: Increase participation in sport and recreation, especially for groups who face barriers.

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
3.3.1 Provide equitable access and targeted programming for priority population groups at the City's aquatic, leisure and recreation facilities.	Sensory Quiet Time has been implemented at Leisurelink Gym and Swim Sundays occurs at Norlane ARC on the final Sunday of each month. This is a time for women to be active in a safe space. A review of the LiveWell (over 55s) program has been conducted, and the program will continue into next financial year. A Sporting Needs Assessment across the region is progressing, with an ELT briefing conducted in April. This piece of work will inform strategic direction on resource allocation and the City's priorities for sporting infrastructure.
3.3.2 Work with our partners to promote inclusive and all abilities participation in sport and recreation.	Pathways Program – Case Study (pp. 24-26) The Fair Play Policy was reviewed and adopted by Council in November 2025. This policy establishes the framework for fees and charges associated with the hire of outdoor recreation facilities (e.g. playing fields, sports courts and pavilions). The policy is intended to promote equity, consistency and transparency whilst supporting the long term, sustainability delivery of these community spaces. The Fair Access Gender Equity tool has been released to sporting clubs and associations, which will promote more gender inclusive sporting club environments. The Sport 4 All Program was delivered with several community groups, schools and sporting organisations. The Sport 4 All Program supports all abilities inclusion in sport and recreation. New workshop modules have been developed which allow flexibility in program participation.



PRIORITY 4: GENDER EQUITY AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Gender equity and prevention of violence is a core priority of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29. In 2025–26, implementation focused on building foundations for a whole-of-City and whole-of-community approach that addresses the drivers of gender inequality, strengthens prevention partnerships and embeds gender considerations in policy, planning and service delivery. This priority remains significant given increasing family violence incidents, persistent gender differences in safety and discrimination, and disproportionate impacts for women, First Nations women, LGBTQIA+ communities and people living in lower socioeconomic areas.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

An equity lens is essential because gender inequality intersects with other forms of disadvantage and discrimination. Local evidence shows that women are more likely than men to feel unsafe and experience discrimination, while First Nations women, LGBTQIA+ communities, older women and people in lower socioeconomic areas may face heightened risks and compounded barriers.

Year 1 reinforced the need for intersectional planning, inclusive engagement and prevention approaches that respond to different lived experiences. Progress is long term and depends on system-wide action beyond the City's direct control, so reporting should include both population indicators and enabling actions that build prevention capability over time.

CASE STUDY: WOMEN IN STREET ART PROGRAM

Overview

Our Equal State, the Victorian Government's gender equality strategy, notes that it can be hard to be what you cannot see. Street art has traditionally been male dominated, reinforcing limited visibility of women's contributions in public life.

The City is working to redress this imbalance through the WiSA (Women in Street Art) Program, aimed to foster, support and build a collection of purposeful street art by women from a diversity of backgrounds.

WiSA supports public art commissions by women artists that also represent women as subjects. It raises the profile of women artists, gives voice to gendered stories in accessible public spaces and contributes to Geelong's identity as a UNESCO City of Design. Commissions will be announced biennially, building a significant body of work over time.

What we did

Expressions of interest opened to Victorian women artists in May 2025. Jasmine Miu (Jaz Mishap) was selected to create [Migrant, Mother, Sister](#) on the rear of the Regent Theatre, facing Union Street.

The mural responds to Geelong's cultural diversity and the underrepresentation of women from multicultural backgrounds. Drawing on the artist's mother's migration journey from Hong Kong to Australia, it recognises migration, settlement and the invisible labour of women.

*"This project is a meaningful opportunity to grow my light-integrated mural practice, and to explore how light, art and storytelling can bring **visibility, connection and comfort** to women, and the greater public of Geelong."* (Artist Statement)

Design and installation began in September 2025, with custom neon and LED lighting in English and Chinese characters. The lighting recognises women's contributions and improves visibility and safety along an important night-time thoroughfare. The work launched on 15 December 2025.

Reach and outcomes

The artwork has received international attention and has been promoted to the Victorian Network of Public Art Officers. After a year of engagement with the community, the City will release its second WiSA program expression of interest in 2027.



Figure 5: Design concept – the mother carrying her daughter through water symbolises generational caregiving, protection and hardships, and the passing of strength from woman to woman



Figure 6: Final artwork – neon signs convey diversity and inclusion, playfulness and a sense of optimism



Figure 7: Union Street view – lighting helps to promote community safety

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 4.1: Promote gender equity and equality within the community.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
4.1.1	Raise awareness of gender equity and violence prevention within the community	WiSA Program – case study (p.31-32) International Women’s Day (IWD) ‘11 years of impact’ event was held on 11 March 2026. It celebrated and honoured IWD award recipients and offered three scholarships to local women to increase their leadership capabilities. Through a Community Strengthening grant, the City funded the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre to hold the Geelong Candlelight Vigil on 6 May, where our community gathered to honour women and children tragically killed by family violence, sharing stories of strength and inspiring meaningful change.
4.1.2	Implement programs that educate young children about gender equity and respectful relationships.	The City partners with Bravehearts to deliver personal safety training to kindergarten children. One program has been delivered so far, and most services have it booked in for the second half of 2026.

Strategic Objective: 4.2: Increase opportunities for prevention of violence.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
4.2.1	Support inclusion for the LGBTQIA+ community	Geelong Rainbow Festival was held from 6-8 February 2026, with support from Geelong Rainbow Inc. A Pride March from Austin to Johnstone Park featured on 7 February followed by free, all ages celebrations including live music, drag performances, market stalls and food trucks.
4.2.2	Build capability for our community-facing workforce to identify and respond to incidents of family violence.	Four family violence training sessions for maternal and child health staff were delivered in partnership with the SAFV Centre. The training aims to build a clearer understanding of what constitutes family violence, including common patterns, indicators, and risk factors. It also strengthens nurses’ clinical skills and confidence in asking safe and sensitive questions and responding appropriately to disclosures.
4.2.3	Work with our regional partners to prevent violence against women	The City and partners delivered the 2025 16 Days of Activism campaign for the Greater Geelong region. The City supported Respect 2040 webinars, SAFV Centre Collective Conversations and Zonta Club of Geelong’s 16 Days of Activism launch through campaign planning, advisory roles, cross-promotion and social media. City representatives also attended the Respect 2040 stakeholder forum in Warrnambool on 18 June.

Strategic Objective 4.3: Foster gender inclusive leadership, policies, and workforce development

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
4.3.1	Work to improve gender balance in Community Services workforces that are predominately dominated by one gender.	The Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–30 includes an action to work with leaders of gender-segregated work areas to identify barriers to gender balance and actions to address them. This will be monitored through reporting to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.
4.3.2	Develop and implement the Gender Equality Action Plan 2026-30	The Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–30 has been developed, with actions across seven gender equality indicators, including recruitment and promotion, workforce and Council composition, the gender pay gap, gender segregation and flexible working arrangements.

Strategic Objective 4.4: Ensure the community feels safe in public places.

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
4.4.1	Work with our partners to promote community safety initiatives and monitor local hot spots.	We work closely with Victoria Police and local community safety partners to promote community safety initiatives and monitor local hotspots. Council actively participates in the Local Community Safety Committee, led by Victoria Police, where local public safety concerns are identified and prioritised. We also regularly communicate with the community to encourage the reporting of crime and antisocial behaviour, helping to inform police tasking and local safety responses.
4.4.2	Embed gender equity principles into infrastructure planning, masterplans, and urban design frameworks.	A gender impact assessment was completed as part of the finalisation of the Public Art Strategy, which will inform future commissions and opportunities.
4.4.3	Design and activate public spaces to promote community safety (e.g., lighting, passive surveillance).	Median strip artwork and a comprehensive lighting upgrade have been installed along Moorabool Street in central Geelong. The artwork represents the Moorabool River and uses 1.4 tonnes of recycled glass diverted from landfill. The lighting upgrade complements the artwork and allows the street to be illuminated in different colours for significant events while supporting community safety. The City provided seed funding to Barwon Events to launch the Geelong City Market in October 2025, helping reinvigorate the Little Malop Street Central precinct. Summer survey feedback was strongly positive, with 88 per cent of respondents reporting a strong sense of community connection and 86 per cent rating safety as excellent or good.



PRIORITY 5: CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH IMPACTS

Climate change and health impacts is a core priority of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29. In 2025–26, implementation focused on applying a stronger health lens to climate adaptation and resilience work, including access to green space, urban cooling, community awareness and preparedness for extreme weather. This priority remains highly relevant locally, with many residents concerned about climate change, its health impacts and the comfort of homes during temperature extremes.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Children, older people, people with disability, people living with chronic health conditions, people on low incomes, renters, and people living in homes that are difficult to keep cool may face greater exposure and lower capacity to adapt to climate change. Local data also shows variation across planning areas in climate concern and thermal comfort, reinforcing the importance of place-based responses. Climate resilience is strengthened when urban greening, public health, emergency planning and social equity considerations are brought together.

Climate-related health impacts span planning, infrastructure, public health, emergency management and community partnerships. While the City can influence important enabling conditions, many outcomes depend on broader environmental trends and coordinated action beyond Council's direct control. Applying a health lens helps position adaptation as prevention and equity work.

CASE STUDY: NATURE STRIP GARDENS

Overview

The City's [Environment Strategy 2020–30](#) identifies pressure on native vegetation, habitat and biodiversity from climate change, population growth and land-use change. In urban areas, hard surfaces increase heat and runoff. Nature strip gardens help reduce these impacts by adding vegetation, improving permeability and supporting neighbourhood amenity.

What we did

A 2024–25 pilot by Rotary Clubs of Geelong and District, supported by a City grant, helped residents plant 20 nature strip gardens using the City's draft guidelines. The pilot generated strong interest, with 82 people registering nature strip gardens for advice on safe design and maintenance.

Following the pilot, Rotary Clubs of Geelong and District received a Climate Change Partnership Grant to expand the program, supporting 100 homeowners across Geelong, North Bellarine and Ocean Grove with help from Ocean Grove Coast Care.

Reach and outcomes

The project has improved local greening while strengthening neighbour connections. Native gardens support pollinators, reduce heat stress, improve stormwater absorption and reduce pressure on drainage infrastructure.

“Nature strip gardens offer powerful environmental benefits. They reduce emissions from mowing, conserve water with drought-tolerant native plants, increase carbon capture and create habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife. They also help manage stormwater and cool our urban areas – all vital contributions to a zero-emissions, climate-resilient city.” (Rotary Club of Highton)

Key learnings

An unexpected outcome of the project has been the vibrant sense of community it has fostered, with stories of neighbours offering to help each other with labour and gardening equipment.

“These gardens spark conversations, build connections, and inspire a shared sense of pride” (Rotary Club of Highton)



Figure 8: Completed nature strip garden. Source: *Geelong Times*, 5 April 2026, photo supplied by Rotary Club of Highton

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 5.1: Foster improved access to green spaces and the natural environment

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
5.1.1	Promote Greater Geelong's natural assets to the community, highlighting the health and wellbeing benefits of being in nature	The Council adopted the Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 in July 2026 which aims to protect, enhance and restore our region's biodiversity. In this Strategy, the City recognises the importance of connecting with nature for community health and wellbeing. Strategic outcomes include 'greater access to natural open space and nature-based experiences for residents in nature-poor (northern) suburbs' and 'improved access to nature for people of all abilities across the City.' One of the 10-year targets is to increase the number of Geelong residents connected and engaged with nature.
5.1.2	Increase tree canopy cover and create shady pedestrian streetscapes to reduce urban heat island effects and UV exposure.	Greater Geelong has been recognised as a Tree City of the World by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. Trees play a central role in shaping Greater Geelong's character and liveability. The City is on track to plant a minimum of 2,400 trees and implement a watering/maintenance program. The Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) 2026-36 has been updated and released for public feedback. The Draft UFS seeks to increase the municipal canopy target from 25 per cent to 30 per cent by 2036. Current planting programs alone are not sufficient to achieve the long-term canopy target, and opportunities exist to expand planting into underutilised spaces including nature strips, road reserves, drainage corridors, vacant land, and private land.

Strategic Objective 5.2: Increase community resilience to the health impacts of climate change and extreme weather events

Strategic action		2025–26 progress / key achievements
5.2.1	Develop a communications strategy to raise awareness of the health impacts of climate change and promote climate actions that improve health.	No activity in Year 1.
5.2.2	Raise community awareness of the risks associated with the increase in frequency and severity of extreme weather events.	Our Climate Change Response Plan 2021-30 builds on the goals established by our Environment Strategy 2020-30 and details how the City will support coordinated and collective action to achieve net zero community emissions by 2035 and increase the resilience of our region to the impacts of climate change. The response plan guides our planning, decision-making and actions to focus our efforts to improve the health of our local environment, reduce our emissions footprint and

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
	thrive through a changing climate. The 3-year action plan has been reviewed and updated. It maintains the same principles in the initial response plan: 1. Support an Empowered and Active Community 2. Increase Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Production 3. Switch to Sustainable Transport and Cleaner Fuels 4. Reduce Non-Energy Emissions and Increase Carbon Storage 5. Increase Awareness and Understanding of Climate Change Impacts 6. Build Climate Action into Decision-Making 7. Increase Collaborative Climate Change Responses The Environment Strategy 2025-26 Highlights Report provides a summary of achievements in delivering the Environment Strategy 2020-30. The actions supporting the implementation of this strategy aim to reduce adverse impacts on our natural environment and assist homeowners to build resilience to extreme heat, helping to reduce the impacts of climate change.
5.2.3 Identify opportunities to create climate resilient local food systems.	Refer to action 2.3.1 on page 22.
5.2.4 Support partnerships and programs that engage the community in environmentally sustainable initiatives.	Climate Change Partnership Grants – Nature Strip Gardens – Case Study (pp. 35-36) The City delivered the biennial Geelong Nature Festival, Explore and Restore, in July 2025. More than 52 partner organisations, mostly community volunteer groups, delivered 50 events across the region, attracting more than 2,420 attendees. Events included a family fun day, practical demonstrations, nature walks, planting and habitat restoration opportunities. Environment & Sustainability grants – 8 grants, \$59,635, topics included connecting with nature, solar energy improvements, habitat improvements and litter reduction.
5.2.5 Build multi agency partnerships to effectively respond to emergency events and support community recovery	The City undertakes planning and preparedness for strengthening community resilience to hazards exacerbated by climate change.



Little Malop Street,
Geelong

PRIORITY 6: HARM MINIMISATION

Harm minimisation is a core priority of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025–29. In 2025–26, implementation focused on prevention, enforcement, community awareness and partnership-based responses to reduce harms associated with alcohol, tobacco, vaping and gambling. Local patterns reinforce the need for a coordinated response that combines regulation, education, place-based action and collaboration with partners.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

An equity lens is essential because harms associated with tobacco, vaping, alcohol misuse and gambling are not distributed evenly. Local evidence highlights particular concern for young people in relation to vaping, men in relation to alcohol-related harm, and communities experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage where gambling losses and cumulative harms can be more pronounced.

Local government has an important role in shaping safer environments, influencing community norms and supporting coordinated local responses. A key learning from 2025–26 is that prevention, enforcement and partnerships work best when treated as complementary streams of action.

CASE STUDY: BARWON SOUTH WEST VAPING PREVENTION COALITION

Overview

The Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition was a VicHealth-funded regional initiative led by the City of Greater Geelong as part of Vape Free Victoria. Delivered across 2024 and 2025, it brought together councils, schools, health services, libraries, community organisations and young people to reduce vaping-related harm through collective impact, youth co-design and local prevention activity.

The project aimed to increase young people's awareness of vaping harms, reduce exposure to vaping products and strengthen prevention, early intervention and referral pathways. It focused on young people across mainstream, alternative and specialist education settings, supported by parents, carers, educators, youth workers and sporting clubs.

Project partners included:

- VicHealth (Funding body)
- City of Greater Geelong (Lead)
- Barwon Health (backbone support)
- Barwon Adolescent Taskforce
- Colac Otway Shire Council
- Colac Area Health
- Surf Coast Shire Council
- Corangamite Shire Council
- Timboon and District Healthcare Service
- Glenelg Shire Council
- Warrnambool City Council
- South West Healthcare



Figure 9: Cr Rowan Story with members of 2025 Youth Council

What we did

The project established regional governance and local delivery across six LGAs. Partners delivered school and community education, World No Tobacco Day activities, parent and teacher sessions, youth-led campaigns, creative resources, local promotion and a regional vaping survey.

Young people co-designed posters, decals, films, animations, slogans, murals and advocacy messages, including local work with North Geelong Secondary College, Northern Bay College, the City's Youth Development team, CatholicCare and the Youth Vape Prevention Action Group.

A youth-led short film screening at Geelong Library in February 2026 showcased regional co-designed work. The film and resources remain freely available online and continue to support school and community education.

The project also delivered practical harm-reduction outcomes. Vape recycling bins at The Nest Youth Hub and The fOrT Youth Centre diverted 58kg of vapes from landfill during a 12-month trial, which ended in June 2026.

Reach and outcomes

The project reached more than 20 schools and community organisations across six LGAs, with 2,025 active participants, 261 involved participants, an estimated audience reach of 5,915 people and 1,239 regional survey responses.

Digital promotion generated 43,219 impressions and 16,747 views. Two animations co-designed with young people in Geelong have reached more than 53,000 YouTube views.

Short-term outcomes include increased awareness, stronger partnerships, improved use of youth-led approaches, and sustainable resources for schools and community settings. Long-term behaviour change is not yet known.

Challenges

Key achievements included a functioning regional partnership model, youth-led creative assets, stronger co-design capability, improved relationships across councils, schools and health services, and sustainable prevention resources.

Challenges included tight timelines, limited staff capacity, school scheduling pressures, low parent and sports club engagement, and the complexity of coordinating partners across a large region.

Key learnings

- Clear governance agreed roles and consistent communication are essential for regional partnerships.
- Youth co-design produces more credible and engaging prevention messages.
- School-based delivery works best with sufficient lead time and alignment to school priorities.
- Creative formats such as film, murals, animation and social media resonate with young people.
- Parent, carer and sports club engagement needs flexible options beyond in-person sessions.

Next steps

- Sustain regional coordination through the Regional E-Cigarette and Tobacco Working Group.
- Maintain and refresh youth-led resources, referral pathways and QR codes.
- Embed vaping prevention into school wellbeing, curriculum, arts and leadership programs.
- Support further youth-led advocacy, peer education and campaign development.
- Strengthen evaluation tools and advocate for longer funding cycles and practical implementation supports.

Summary

Overall, the project generated measurable value by strengthening regional prevention capability, producing youth-designed resources, supporting youth advocacy and creating practical tools that continue beyond the funded period.

PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Strategic Objective 6.1: Collaborate with partner organisations to increase opportunities for prevention

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
6.1.1 Increase community awareness of the harms associated with alcohol and tobacco use, vaping, and gambling	Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition – Case Study (pp. 41-43) The City supported the Federal Government's 'Give up for good' campaign, displaying printed resources in relevant community locations such as libraries and neighbourhood houses.
6.1.2 Explore partnership opportunities to identify and promote smoke/vape-free areas within Greater Geelong.	Youth Council requested that the City investigate designated vape-free and smoke-free zones in Central Geelong. While the local law allows smoke-free areas to be established, implementation and enforcement would require significant resources. This action is not being progressed at this stage.

Strategic Objective 6.2: Create supportive environments for health promoting behaviours.

Strategic action	2025–26 progress / key achievements
6.2.1 Actively support community or sporting clubs, groups, or organisations to divest themselves of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs).	Project with Lara Sporting Club completed. Continuing to work with Bell Park Sport and Recreation Club.
6.2.2 Monitor the sale of tobacco and the provision of smoke free dining areas.	The program is on track with target inspections, although sales-to-minors test purchasing may be affected by the withdrawal of the agency providing test purchasers.
6.2.3 Promote community safety by monitoring alcohol free and smoke free areas.	Refer to 6.2.2 for smokefree areas.
6.2.4 Provide support for families to create smoke-free and safe home environments.	The National 'Give up for good' campaign was promoted through our Maternal Child Health Centres. New parents are provided with education about link between Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and smoking at their first home visit by Maternal and Child Health Nurses.

Recommendations for 2026-27

Year 1 of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy has established a solid foundation, with significant activity across all six priority areas. It also highlighted several implementation learnings.

Many outcomes are influenced by broader social, economic and environmental conditions beyond the City's direct control, reinforcing the importance of focusing on the enabling actions Council can influence. There are opportunities to strengthen governance, action tracking and equity practice so the City can demonstrate progress toward longer-term health and wellbeing outcomes.

Longer-term change also requires a systems approach. Embedding a systems approach to health and wellbeing means integrating health, equity and prevention into the way the organisation plans, funds, designs, delivers and evaluates its work. It requires shared governance, cross-Council accountability, place-based action, strong partnerships and routine use of data and community voice. Rather than relying on individual projects or champions, the organisation creates the policies, processes and decision-making conditions that consistently support healthier, fairer and more connected communities.

In 2026–27, we will develop an internal annual implementation plan, initiate a cross-organisation governance mechanism and participate in strengthening shared measurement with regional partners. Partnerships will continue to be a focus, increasing delivery capacity and supporting coordinated action.

The next annual report will include a mid-strategy review that assesses implementation progress, identifies emerging gaps and opportunities, reviews the suitability of measures, and informs annual planning for the remaining years of the Strategy.

Appendix 1: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

PRIORITY 1: MENTAL WELLBEING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	
The community experiences lower levels of psychological distress	Proportion (percentage or %) of community members experiencing moderate to high levels of psychological distress	13% / 2024 14% women / 10% men	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
	Proportion (percentage or %) of community members with a mental health condition	11.4% / 2023 14.2% 15 to 24 years / 2024	
	Incidence of hospital admissions for self-harm and suicide	Self-harm rate: 2.77 per 1000 women / 1.04 per 1000 men	
	Proportion (percentage or %) of community members accessing mental health services	24.8% women / 15.9% men	
All community members feel connected and included in community life and have appropriate access to community facilities and services	Proportion (percentage or %) of community members experiencing loneliness	25% (2024)	
	Ability to call on someone outside the household in an emergency	84% (2024)	
All community members have access to housing that is affordable and in a community that is stable, supportive and safe.	Number of community members estimated to be experiencing homelessness	1,546 people or 58.2 per 10,000 (2021)	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Advocacy through submissions and grant applications	10 grant applications 7 successful	9 grant applications 8 successful	Slightly fewer grant opportunities but an improved success rate.
Participation in City run programs	Maternal and Child Health: Feeding Support Service (FSS): - Barwon Heads 260 - Highton: 292 - Norlane: 226 First Time Parents Group (FTPG): 102	FSS (Combined 659) - Barwon Heads: 274 - Highton: 242 - Norlane: 143 FTPG: 89	Engagement with the Feeding Support Service in Highton and Norlane has reduced over the year as the service is now appointment only. This change has increased client satisfaction and breastfeeding outcomes. Engagement with the First Time Parent Groups has decreased.
	Early Years: Supported playgroups: 14 playgroups / 120 families Our Place (Northern Bay): no baseline	Supported playgroups: 15 playgroups / 470 families attending, 72 families receiving in home support Our Place (Northern Bay): 180 community engagement activities / 1306 participants attended activities	Increased engagement with playgroups and Our Place Northern Bay.
	Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA): 27 Teen MHFA: 279 Love Bites: 270 Celebrate YOU: 84	Youth MHFA: 64 Teen MHFA: 381 Love Bites: 0 Celebrate YOU: 322	These programs are delivered by our Youth Development Unit. The Love Bites program was on hold for 2025-26. Celebrate YOU (Body Positivity) is delivered upon request, so the City received a higher number of requests to provide this program.
	Aqua Aerobics: 50,807 Group Fitness: 71,921 Motivate30: 25,216 Reformer Pilates: 3,907	Aqua Aerobics: 53,424 Group Fitness: 81,707 Motivate30: 31,504 Reformer Pilates: 4,550	These programs are delivered by our Swim, Sport and Leisure team. There was increased participation across all programs.
	Community Leadership: 18	21	Slightly higher numbers participated in the 2025 program.
	Social Inclusion Action Group: N/A	18	This group was established in 2025, no baseline.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Number of grants provided to the community	Community Strengthening: 58 grants / \$263,000	62 applications / 31 grants / \$203,214	Most grants had a smaller funding pool and fewer grants were provided. Positive Ageing grants were the exception with a larger funding pool and more grants provided for community activities for older people.
	Arts Projects: 13 grants / \$120,000	37 applications / 11 grants / \$105,920	
	Children's Week: 29 grants / \$20,000	30 applications / 23 grants / \$20,000	
	Community Events: 30 grants / \$180,000	43 applications / 21 grants / \$174,500	
	Positive Ageing: 26 grants / \$24,000	41 applications / 37 grants / \$33,000	
Provision of assets in line with the City's Social Infrastructure Planning and Investment Policy	Kindergarten - Best Start Best Life (BSBL):	The City signed the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) in December 2025.	This agreement will help ensure the City can meet the growing need for kindergartens in line with the state government's Best Start Best Life reforms.
Monitor employment rates for priority population groups	18.5% of resident workers were born overseas (2021) (33.9% Victoria) 12.1% of resident workers speak a language other than English at home (2021) (27.8% Victoria) 3.8% of resident workers are newly arrived (2021) (6.6% Victoria) <u>First Nations:</u> - 50.4% Full time / 33.2% Part time (Victoria) - (53% Full Time / 35.7% Part Time (Greater Geelong)	No update. Census Data – to be reviewed when 2026 Census data released	Greater Geelong has a higher employment rate than Victoria for First Nations people.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Number of local businesses attending capacity building sessions and engaging in social procurement initiatives	No baseline.	We hosted a Geelong Chamber of Commerce Corporate Partners event in the final quarter of 2025, which had a community wealth building theme. Our panel speakers focused on social procurement, social enterprises and community wealth building.	
Strength of partnerships with stakeholders (e.g. Homelessness Working Group)	Homelessness Working Group: 6 meetings (calendar year) / 23 member organisations Health and Wellbeing Partners Network: 4 meetings (Sept 2024, 5 people / Nov 2024, unsure / Feb 2025, 5 people / May 2025, 9 people) Social Inclusion Action Group: 3 internal working group meetings (establishment phase)	Homelessness Working Group: 2 meetings (calendar year) / 23 member organisations Health and Wellbeing Partners Network: 4 meetings (Aug 2025, 26 people / Nov 2025, 19 people / February 2026, 18 people / June 2026, 15 people) Social Inclusion Action Group: 1 Loneliness Forum with 50 attendees, 14 SIAG meetings and 3 SIAG trainings/events	Strong engagement across all three partnerships

PRIORITY 2: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	
The community has equitable access to safe, healthy, and sustainable food and the food system is more resilient to shocks and emergencies	Proportion (per cent) of community members experiencing food insecurity	8% / 2024	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
	Average distance to healthy and unhealthy food retail outlets	1.3km av (healthy food) 2.28 km av (fast food)	
	Amount of food waste diverted from landfill	No data available yet 51% of kerbside waste collection was diverted from landfill (2023/24)	

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	
There are higher rates of breastfeeding and healthy eating among the community	Proportion (per cent) of community members meeting fruit and vegetable guidelines	11% / 2024	
	Proportion (per cent) of community members consuming sugar sweetened drinks every day	17% / 2024	
	Proportion (per cent) of community members who eat takeaway meals or snacks	16% more than once per week / 2024	
	Proportion (per cent) of infants breastfeeding at 6 months of age	55% to 3 months of age / 2019-20	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Compliance with Management Procedure (Number of caterers eligible for inclusion in Catering for Good Directory)	6 local caterers are currently listed in the Catering for Good Directory. Barwon Health completed menu assessments with support from the City.	6 local caterers	No change
Strategy / policies endorsed by Council	N/A	N/A	No change
Participation in early years services where healthy eating is prioritised and part of funded breakfast clubs (child care and kindergarten).	All childcare offer breakfast as part of normal program 3 kindergartens (Norlane 54, Korayn Birralelee in Corio 154, and Whittington 20) offered breakfast programs for a total of 228 children across 40 weeks	All childcare offer breakfast as part of normal program 3 kindergartens (Norlane 280, Korayn Birralelee in Corio 372, and Whittington 20) offered breakfast programs for a total of 672 children across 40 weeks	Participation in kindergarten breakfast programs has increased significantly in Norlane and Corio.
Number of Council owned and operated facilities compliant with Healthy Choices guidelines	2: Lara Swimming Pool and North Bellarine Aquatic Centre	3: Lara Swimming Pool, Splashdown Leisure Centre, Kardinia Swimming Pool	Compliance with Healthy Choices guidelines has increased.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
			NBAC is currently closed for redevelopment and will transition to a leaseholder arrangement. Noting other centres have made progress but are not yet fully compliant.

PRIORITY 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE LIVING

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	
There are more opportunities for the community to be physically active.	Modes of travel, walkability, distance to public transport	LGA: 48% / 2024 Suburbs: Not available	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
The community reports higher levels of physical activity and lower levels of sedentary behaviour.	Proportion (per cent) of community members across all age groups meeting physical activity guidelines	65%	
	Proportion (per cent) of adults who are sedentary	20%	
There are more liveable neighbourhoods which provide access to every day needs such as food, jobs, places for community interaction and open space.	Liveability Index	LGA: 69% / 2024 Suburbs: Ranges from 1% in Connewarre to 99% in Geelong	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Participation in / attendance at programs for priority populations	Women's Gym and Swim Program Aug: 31, Sep: 25, Oct:18, Nov: 7, Apr: 16, May: 8, June: 15	Jul: 30, Aug: 31, Sept: 22, Oct: 6, Nov: 27, Feb: 9, Mar: 7, Apr: 5, May: 18, Jun: 13	Whilst numbers have fluctuated, there has been a total overall increase from 120 to 168.
	School Learn to Swim (school managed intensive 1-2 week program) Approx 90,000 engagements	80,000 engagements	An overall decrease in attendance.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
	Live Well (Over 55s) Individual Participants: 695 Enrolments: 1,750	Individual Participants: 690 Enrolments: 1691	Consistent participation numbers.
	Pathways Program (referral based) Total Referrals: 124 Referring Partners: 3	Total Referrals: 318 Referring Partners: 4	An increased number of referrals into this program.
New membership tiers for priority populations in the City's leisure facilities	Concession Off Peak: 120 Active Adults: 2,225 Concession: 2,287	Concession Off Peak: 336 Active Adults: 3,488 Concession: 2,422	Increased numbers across all three membership tiers.
Number of partnership initiatives for physical activity	Kids Active Travel Program (funded by SRV) partnership with BCH, Active Geelong, Leopold Primary School, St Leonards Primary School, Portarlington Primary School and Newcomb Primary School.	Kids Active Travel Program (funded by SRV) partnership with Northern Bay College.	Received additional funding, demonstrating the program's success.
		The City partnered with Escaping Your Comfort Zone Inc. to introduce Side by Side Nature Walks - a free walking program funded by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing. The program connects women aged 50+ to walk, talk and share time in nature. Over the last 12 months, since August 2025, the project now has 128 registered members and more than 350 online followers. Regular walk attendance of 14+ participants.	Importantly, many participants had never joined a walking group before. The simple principle that nobody gets left behind removes one of the biggest barriers to participation: fear of slowing others down.

PRIORITY 4: GENDER EQUITY AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	Year 4 / 2028-29
People of all genders feel safe and live a life free from violence and discrimination	Family violence incidents reported to the Police	1887.4 incidents per 100,000 (2024-25) <i>Note: this is annual data but is updated after this report is published.</i>	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
	Feelings of safety in the local area, and no significant difference is detected based on gender	82% (feel safe or very safe) / 2024 Male: 85%; Female: 78%	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Number of community events which promote gender equity.	The 2025 Women in Community Life awards was held in the lead up to International Women's Day in March 2025, recognising 22 women (including cis and trans women and gender non-binary people) across three award categories: Leadership and Advocacy, Human Rights, and Strengthening Healthy Communities. 16 Days of Activism 2024 campaign: 3 webinars and 2 community events	International Women's Day (IWD) '11 years of impact' event was held on 11 March 2026. It celebrated and honoured IWD award recipients and offered three scholarships to local women to increase their leadership capabilities. 16 Days of Activism 2025 campaign: Respect 2040 webinars promoted Supported SAFV Centre Primary Prevention Forum Supported Zonta Club of Geelong's launch Turned lights orange at Geelong Waterfront and on Moorabool and Malop Streets symbolising a brighter future free from violence Delivered the Barwon Respect Cup on 27 November 2025 - 95 students from 9 schools. This City-led initiative supports schools to promote healthy relationships, identify negative relationships and promote bystander intervention. The full day event brings together Year 9 students from schools across the Greater Geelong Region for a series of	The 16 Days of Activism continues to be strongly supported by the City.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
		workshops and a friendly netball competition. The event will be held again in 2027.	
Strength of partnerships with stakeholders (e.g. Respect 2040).	6 x Communications Working Group meetings 6 x Community of Practice meetings attended 3 x Executive Governance Group meetings (Sept 2024, Feb 2025, June 2025)	4 x Community of Practice meetings attended 4 x Communications Working Group meetings attended 4 x R2040 Resource Development Working Group meetings attended R2040 Annual Forum attended by Alex & Julia June 2026 Executive Governance Group - no longer meeting in 2025/26	Respect 2040 remains a strong partnership for gender equity work at the City.
Confidence of staff to identify family violence in the community.	No baseline.	N/A	This is part of new Gender Equality Action Plan 2026-30
Gender impact assessments are completed for all significant recreation infrastructure design projects as per the Gender Equality Act, 2020. (Council Plan indicator: Increase the number of Gender+ Impact Assessments completed)	4 GIAs completed	10 GIAs completed	The City has conducted more gender impact assessments in the last 12 months.
Equal gender split in senior leadership positions.	62% women; 38% men	64.3% women; 35.7% men	Slight increase in proportion of women in leadership roles.

PRIORITY 5: CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH IMPACTS

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	
The community is equipped to adapt to the adverse health effects of climate change and is capable of bouncing back from climate-related challenges.	Proportion (percentage) of residents concerned about the impact of climate change on their health	42% / 2024	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
	Proportion (percentage or %) of homes where the temperature is always uncomfortable	7% / 2024	
	Lower incidence of heat related illness	ED presentation for heat related injury: 9 (2022-23)	
	Lower incidence of thunderstorm asthma	Data not available	
The City encourages well designed public realm and public spaces which create a cooler, greener, more liveable city.	Supportive strategic framework	Development of following strategies underway: - Public Realm Framework (draft) - Open Space Strategy (draft) - Urban Forest Strategy (draft)	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Comment
Progress towards planting one million new trees in Greater Geelong by 2030.	Number of trees planted: 2,544 street and park trees; 3,500 tube stock	2,483 Street and Park trees 1300 tube-stock	Slight decrease in the number of plantings.
Progress towards 50 per cent of work trips being made by active travel or public transport by 2047.	4.6% (Annual Report 2024-25)	Census Data – to be reviewed when 2026 Census data released	

PRIORITY 6: HARM MINIMISATION

Community Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline (2024-25)	Year 4 / 2028-29
The harm associated with alcohol and tobacco use, vaping, and gambling is reduced.	Fewer community members are at increased risk from alcohol use, and no significant difference is detected by gender	18% at long term risk / 23% men & 12% women / 2024 11% at short term risk / 17% men & 6% women / 2024 Gender difference is statistically significant	These population health and wellbeing indicators will be reviewed again in 2028.
	Decrease in proportion (per cent) of residents who vape	10% of residents are current smokers / 2024 22% of smokers vape / 2024	

Our Measures

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Number of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) applications opposed.	1 application during Caretaker period (prior to Council elections), so unable to provide a response	1 application: This application was not opposed because a harm minimisation approach was used to support a sports club to divest from electronic gaming machines	Consistent number of applications.
Positive outcomes from enforcement activities	Community satisfaction with enforcement of Local Laws: 61 (2023) Tobacco inspections - Outdoor locations (113) - Retailers (97) - Eating and drinking areas (143) Test purchasing for sales to minors (4 days)	Tobacco inspections: - Outdoor locations (110) - Retailers (101) - Eating and drinking areas (194) Test purchasing for sales to minors: no test purchasers were available, so 61 additional education visits were conducted.	Next Community Satisfaction Survey for Greater Geelong will be conducted in August and September 2026. Tobacco inspections increased across retailers and eating and drinking areas.

Measure	Baseline	2025–26 result	Trend / interpretation
Strength of partnerships with stakeholders	The City received funding from VicHealth in 2024 to lead the Barwon South West Vaping Prevention Coalition . The Coalition partnered with the Barwon South West Public Health Unit, 6 local councils, 4 health services and 10 community organisations across Greater Geelong, Colac Otway, Surf Coast, Corangamite, Warrnambool and Glenelg Local Government Areas. 20 education settings have been involved in the project. There were monthly steering committee meetings with 8-10 members attending.	VicHealth funding for the Coalition ended in December 2025. Between July and December 2025, the City engaged with each project partner organisation on an individual basis to support and ensure completion of project deliverables. 2025-26 collaborations included a regional approach to World No Tobacco Day messaging and events, the utilisation of existing co-designed resources and opportunities to participate in Quit pilot projects.	The project strengthened partnerships and created new connections across councils, community health services and schools. These relationships opened channels for collaboration and have laid the foundation for future joint initiatives. Membership of Regional E-Cigarette and Tobacco (RET) Working Group coordinated by Barwon Health has expanded, and this group will continue beyond the project.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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2.8. Complaint Handling Policy

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To present the Complaint Handling Policy (Attachment 1) to Council for adoption.

Background

2. Council is required to develop and maintain a Complaint Policy under section 107 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)*.
3. Beyond legislative requirements, the Complaint Handling Policy formalises Council's commitment to being responsive to the diverse needs of the community, providing high-quality services, making fair and effective decisions and continuous improvement.
4. Following a review, in June 2026, Council endorsed the Draft Complaint Handling Policy for public exhibition and community engagement.
5. The draft policy was issued for community engagement for a four-week period commencing 3 July 2026 on Council's Have Your Say platform. More than 3500 subscribers to the platform were notified of the engagement activity.
6. The project also featured in the quarterly Have Your Say newsletter which is distributed to 4000 people. Information was also posted on the City of Greater Geelong's Facebook page and an article was published in a City News article on Friday 24 July.

Key Matters

7. During the consultation period 127 people visited the Complaint Handling Policy engagement page on the Have Your Say platform. Twelve respondents provided feedback.
8. As part of the consultation submitters were asked to rank the importance of a set of guiding principles to be included in the policy. Commitment and Transparency were ranked highest, followed by Accountability, Accessibility and Continuous Improvement. Objectivity and Fairness and Privacy were ranked lowest.
9. The engagement requested that the community rate the ease of use of the policy; eight of the 12 respondents found the policy 'easy' or 'very easy' to understand.
10. Insights from the feedback provided by respondents shaped changes to the policy:
 - 10.1. Guiding principles have been incorporated and ordered according to the community's ranking of importance;
 - 10.2. Stronger procedural governance regarding complaints about staff;
 - 10.3. Font size has been increased in-line with government accessibility standards;

- 10.4. Additional detail as to how the City manages complaints at each of the different levels of the complaint handling framework has been included. Timeframes for responses, the frequency of communication with complainants and the reasons why a complaint will or will not be investigated has been added;
- 10.5. A definition of 'resolution' and examples of different types has been added to the 'definitions' section;
- 10.6. The City's commitment to training staff in complaint handling now features in the policy and more detail on how the City reports complaints included; and,
11. Decision making to restrict or limit access to services when complainant behaviours necessitate.
12. The Policy has also been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Changes include the incorporation of a child safety focus in the policy summary and a definition of 'child'. The policy also makes it clear that the City welcomes complaints from children and young people and describes how the City will support them to make a report, including enlisting the support of a City staff member or a nominated support person.
13. Lastly, the Complaint Handling Policy does not apply to complaints about councillors which are dealt with in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes the amendments to the Complaint Handling Policy outlined in this report;**
- 2. Adopts the Complaint Handling Policy as at attachment 1;**
- 3. Thanks the community for their input and feedback from the community engagement.**

Financial Sustainability

14. There are no material impacts to Council's Budget as a result of adopting this policy.

Community Engagement

15. The community engagement report is attached (Attachment 2).

Social Equity and Sustainability

16. The policy enables customers who may be unable to document their complaint in writing to contact Council to have their complaint lodged by an officer, either on the phone or in-person.
17. Council offers people with a hearing or speech impairment to use the National Relay Service to connect with an officer. Council also offers translation services to people from a non-English speaking background. An additional section has been included for Children and Young People requiring assistance to make a complaint, either with the help of Council staff or the assistance of a support person.
18. The City is committed to enabling complaints made by children and young people. It is also committed to upholding the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the City's Child Safe policies, ensuring that all complaints, concerns and allegations involving children and young people under the age of 18 are responded to promptly, respectfully and in a child-focused manner.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

19. A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was undertaken for this report. The assessment identified that, while the policy applies broadly to all community members, there are potential gendered and intersectional impacts relating to access, safety, accessibility, and participation in the complaints process. The findings and recommendations of the GIA have been considered in the development of the policy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

20. Section 107 of the Act requires all councils to develop, adopt and maintain a complaints policy and associated complaint handling procedures that incorporate the prescribed definition of a complaint and support accessible internal review processes.
21. Section 107 commenced on 31 July 2021, requiring councils to have compliant policies and procedures in place by 31 December 2021. Council fulfilled its obligation at the time.
22. The Complaint Handling Policy has been reviewed to ensure ongoing alignment with the legislative requirements of the Act and contemporary guidance issued by the Victorian Ombudsman.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

23. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity

Conflict of Interest

24. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

25. The Policy supports mitigation of governance, compliance and customer service risks by strengthening Council's complaint handling framework and ensuring alignment with the requirements of the Act and recent guidance issued by the Victorian Ombudsman.
26. The officer recommendation aligns with Council's cautious appetite for Regulatory, Legal and Governance risks, as it supports transparency, accountability and legislative compliance through clear and consistent complaint handling processes.
27. It also aligns with Council's balanced appetite for Community and Operations & Service Delivery risks by improving accessibility, consistency, oversight and continuous improvement in customer complaint management.
28. Failure to review and update the policy may increase the risk of non-alignment with current legislative requirements and complaint handling standards.

Environmental Sustainability

29. The Policy is administrative in nature and is not expected to have any direct environmental sustainability impacts.

Attachments

1. Complaint Handling Policy [2.8.1 - 15 pages]
2. Complaint Handling Policy - Community Engagement Report [2.8.2 - 8 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

VERSION: 2

TYPE OF POLICY: Council

APPROVER Council

APPROVAL DATE: SEPTEMBER 2026

REVIEW DATE: December 2030

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Customer Service
Manager

<i>Revision</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Authorised by:</i>
1	31 October 2022	Document published	CEO

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Introduction

PURPOSE

We recognise that people have the right to complain about our actions, decisions and the services we provide.

We value complaints and commit to resolving issues quickly, fairly, efficiently and with courtesy. We promote access, equity, and transparency throughout the complaints process, while maintaining privacy.

We are also committed to being a child safe organisation and have zero tolerance for child abuse. We welcome and enable children and young people to provide feedback on our services including supporting them to make a complaint.

We are committed to upholding the Victorian Child Safe Standards and ensuring that all complaints, concerns and allegations involving children and young people under the age of 18 are responded to promptly, respectfully and in a child-focused manner. We will ensure that management of complaints involving children are handled in a child safe manner.

The purpose of this Policy is to demonstrate our commitment to receiving complaints or feedback, ensuring that complaints made about services, decisions, or actions are handled fairly, transparently, and promptly and to comply with relevant laws. To demonstrate that we are committed to best practice complaint handling, our Policy is consistent with the Victorian Ombudsman's Councils and complaints – a good practice Guide (2nd edition, 2021).

This policy is based on seven principles:

Commitment - We are committed to receiving and resolving complaints. We value complaints and recognise they are part of our core business, to serve our community and improve our services.

Transparency - We make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.

Accessibility – We make it easy for people to complain and Council staff actively help them to navigate the complaints process.

Accountability - We are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling. We provide reasons for decisions and we are open to appropriate review processes.

Objectivity and fairness - Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and assessed on merit.

Continuous improvement - Acting on, learning from, and using complaint data helps us identify opportunities for improvement.

Privacy - Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified when reported on more widely.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to complaints received by members of the public about decisions, services, and Council staff and contractors.

Complaints about Council staff are conducted in accordance with City Policies, including Managing Conduct.

This Policy does not apply to:

- an initial request for service;
- feedback in the form of a compliment, criticism, comment or suggestion where a response is not sought, or is not reasonable to expect;
- complaints about allegations of fraud or corrupt conduct;
- claims against the City for personal injury or property damage or other loss or damage and allegations of negligence. A claim can only occur when a third-party has suffered a loss or an injury, allegedly as a result of Council's negligence or wrongdoing. Information regarding requests for consideration of a claim for compensation can be accessed via the Council's website [Request for consideration of claim for compensation | City of Greater Geelong](#). If a customer remains dissatisfied with the process or decision of their claim, they may lodge an Internal Review of the matter;
- complaints about individual councillors which are dealt with in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct available at www.geelongaustralia.com.au and also Part 6, Division 5 of the *Local Government Act 2020*; or,
- complaints about matters where there is a process of review, appeal or objection prescribed by legislation, noting that the City may consider matters in the general complaints process if a quicker or less costly resolution might prevail.

Where a complaint does not fall within the scope of our responsibility, or when there is a separate process for review, appeal or objection, we will direct the customer to the appropriate avenue to complain with other authorities or service providers.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
Child or Young Person	A child or young person is a person under 18 years of age.
City	The City of Greater Geelong organisation, led by the CEO.
Contractors	An independent contractor under a contract for service appointed by the City, or any person engaged by or acting on behalf of the City.
Council	The City of Greater Geelong Council comprised of elected councillors and led by the Mayor.
Council staff	Includes employees, trainees and volunteers.
Complaint	Includes the communication, whether orally or in writing, to the Council by a person of their dissatisfaction with: a) the quality of an action taken, decision made or service provided by a member of Council staff or a contractor engaged by the Council; or, b) the delay by a member of Council staff or a contractor engaged by the Council in taking an action, making a decision, or providing a service; or, c) a policy or decision made by a Council or a member of Council staff or a contractor.
Complainant	A person who has expressed dissatisfaction to Council, either verbally or in writing, regarding a Council action, decision, service, delay, or policy, in accordance with section 107(3) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
ELT	The Executive Leadership Team of the City, as constituted from time to time.
Feedback	A compliment, criticism, comment or suggestion where a response is not sought, or not reasonable to expect.
Personal Information	Has the same meaning given to that term in the <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> .

Term	Definition
Request for Service	Contact from a community member seeking Council's assistance, action, or provision of a service.
Resolution	A resolution could include: • a complainant is satisfied with the outcome of their complaint; • an apology; • an explanation; • the issue that is the subject of a complaint is fixed; • fee waivers and other types of financial compensation; • the reversal of the original decision; • any further action is unnecessary and unjustifiable because reaching a mutually agreeable solution would disproportionately consume Council resources. • Council is confident that it's response to a complaint is justifiable if reviewed by an external agency.

Policy

1. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Any member of the public can make a complaint. Complaints can be made via:

Online	Submit a complaint via the online complaint form at: <u>Submit a complaint, report an issue or give feedback City of Greater Geelong</u>
In person	Visit a customer service centre: Wurriki Nyal Civic Building 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong. Corio Village Shopping Centre Shop 48, 83a Purnell Road, Corio. Boronggook Drysdale Library 2-8 Wyndham St, Drysdale. Complaints may also be reported to any of our customer-facing centres.
Phone	03 5272 5272
Mail	Address letters to: Customer Service City of Greater Geelong PO Box 104, Geelong VIC 3220
Using an interpreter	Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 or via https://www.tisnational.gov.au
Deaf or hearing impaired assistance	Contact the National Relay Service and ask them to call 03 5272 5272 Speak and Listen users can call 1300 555 727 TTY users can call 133677 SMS relay users can message 0423 677 767 Note: The area code must be included for each call
Children or Young People	If children or young people require assistance to make a complaint, they can contact us in the way that suits them and we will assist. They may also request the assistance of a support person.

2. ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

- 2.1 The City is committed to ensuring its complaints process is accessible to everyone. Complainants can advise if they have specific communication needs or barriers and Council staff can assist by:
- 2.1.1 using an assistance service, such as an interpreter or TTY (for free);
 - 2.1.2 talking with complainants and documenting their complaint if they have trouble reading or writing and,
 - 2.1.3 communicating with another person acting on a complainant's behalf if they cannot make the complaint themselves.

3. HELPFUL INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN A COMPLAINT

- 3.1 To ensure the City can assist complainants, we ask that they please provide as much information as possible, including:
- 3.1.1 name and contact details. Complainants can complain anonymously, noting that the City may be limited in its ability to investigate and respond;
 - 3.1.2 provide relevant details, such as dates, times, locations and reference numbers and any documents that support the complaint;
 - 3.1.3 detail the outcome being sought from making the Complaint, noting that the City will do what is within its authority to ensure the best outcome; and,
 - 3.1.4 advising of any accessibility or other communication needs, including if a complainant wishes to be represented by another person.

4. PRIVACY

- 4.1 The City keeps personal information secure and will use that information to respond to complaints. Council may also analyse the information provided for the purpose of improving services that relate to each complaint.
- 4.2 Where the City publishes complaint data, personal information is removed.
- 4.3 When a complainant makes a complaint, they will be asked to provide:
- 4.3.1 Their name and contact details;
 - 4.3.2 Whether they have any communication or assistance needs that can be reasonably accommodated;
 - 4.3.3 What they are complaining about including any materials that support the complaint; and,
 - 4.3.4 What outcome they are seeking.

5. COMPLAINTS HANDLING APPROACH

5.1 Summary of the complaint handling approach

Level	One	Two	Three	Four
Objective	Immediate resolution	Investigate complex matters allowing adequate time to investigate.	Provide an independent review if the complainant remains dissatisfied.	Provide assurance to complainants that any decisions are evidence based, well-reasoned and able to withstand external scrutiny.
Acknowledgment	Immediately	Within five business days	Within five business days	Dependent on the agency involved.
Delay	If a resolution cannot be agreed.	Communicated prior to initial timeframe for a response or as needed.	Communicated prior to initial timeframe for a response or as needed.	Dependent on the agency involved.
Resolution	Will vary depending on the circumstance.	21 business days	21 business days	Dependent on the agency involved.

5.2 Level One – Frontline resolution

- 5.2.1 We will acknowledge each customer's concern, clarify their complaint and the outcome they seek.
- 5.2.2 We will attempt to reach a resolution when a customer first contacts us.
- 5.2.3 If we can't provide a resolution immediately, or the matter is complex, about a member of Council staff or if a customer remains dissatisfied, we will offer a Level Two investigation and provide the customer with details of how to lodge.
- 5.2.4 If the complaint relates to a matter that the City cannot assist with, we will refer the complainant to the most appropriate organisation or avenue to make a complaint.

5.3 Level Two – Investigation

- 5.3.1 When we receive a Level Two complaint, we will review the matter and send a written acknowledgement (within five working days), including a reference number, a contact person and a timeframe for when a response is expected.
- 5.3.2 We will assign the matter to the most appropriate team or manager to respond.
- 5.3.3 We will consider the accessibility requirements of complainants when investigating and take this into consideration when responding.
- 5.3.4 As part of our investigation, we will consider the information provided by the complainant, the history of previous contact with us, relevant legislation, policies and procedures, the outcome sought by the complainant and any other information relevant to the complaint.
- 5.3.5 Any delays will be advised to the complainant and an updated timeframe provided.

5.3.6 Once the matter is considered we will provide a written response to the complainant including information about internal review rights.

5.3.7 We aim to resolve Level Two complaints within 21 business days.

5.4 Level Three – Internal Review

5.4.1 We encourage complainants to request an internal review if dissatisfied with the outcome of a Level Two complaint.

5.4.2 The internal review will be conducted by a member of the Council's Integrity and Review Team who has not had any prior involvement with the complaint. The review will be independent of:

5.4.2.1 the person who took the action;

5.4.2.2 the person who made the decision; and,

5.4.2.3 the person who provided the service.

5.4.3 When we receive a request for an internal review we will send a written acknowledgement (within five working days), including a reference number, the contact person and an anticipated timeframe for when they can expect a response.

5.4.4 The internal review will consider information provided by the complainant, the history of previous contact with us, relevant legislation, policies and procedure, the outcome sought by the complainant and any other information relevant to the review.

5.4.5 Any delays will be advised to the complainant and an updated timeframe provided.

5.4.6 We will consider the accessibility requirements of the complainants when investigating and take this into consideration in how we respond.

5.4.7 We will provide a written response of the outcome and provide external review rights (including to the Victorian Ombudsman if appropriate) within 21 business days.

5.5 Level Four – External Review

5.5.1 We understand that not all complainants will be satisfied with the outcome of an internal review. We welcome reviews by external agencies and will assist in any investigations.

5.5.2 We encourage complainants to first seek an outcome from us before contacting external agencies. An external review can be requested from the following organisations:

Type of Complaint	Organisation to contact for external review
Actions or decisions of a Council, Council staff or contractors This includes failure to consider human rights or failure to act compatibly with a human right under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)	Victorian Ombudsman www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Breach of the Local Government Act	Local Government Inspectorate www.lgi.vic.gov.au
Breach of privacy or complaints about Freedom of Information applications	Office of the Victorian Information Commission www.ovic.vic.gov.au
Corruption or public interest disclosures ('whistleblower') complaints	Independent Broad -based Anti -Corruption Commission www.ibac.vic.gov.au
Discrimination	Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission www.humanrights.vic.gov.au
Council Elections	Victorian Electoral Commission www.vec.vic.gov.au

6. UNREASONABLE CONDUCT BY COMPLAINANTS

- 6.1 The City expects Council staff and contractors to be respectful and responsive in all interactions with members of the public and we ask that customers treat Council staff with respect.
- 6.2 While the City understand that people can be angry or frustrated when they make a complaint, in some instances complainants demand a disproportionate amount of time and resources which can affect our ability support other customers and complainants. A small number of complainants may behave in ways that can raise health or safety issues for our employees.
- 6.3 The City does not tolerate occupational violence, aggression or unreasonable behaviour directed at Council staff. Council staff have the right to operate in a safe environment free from abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment and harm. The City will act to protect employees and ensure responses are fair, consistent, proportionate and lawful.
- 6.4 Unreasonable behaviour can be grouped into the following categories:
 - 6.4.1 Unreasonable persistence - Continually raising the same issue or submitting repeated complaints after Council has already provided a response;
 - 6.4.2 Unreasonable demands - Demands (express or implied) which have an unreasonable impact on organisation, staff, contractors, services, time and/or resources;
 - 6.4.3 Unreasonable lack of cooperation - Refusal or inability to engage constructively with Council staff and contractors, processes, or policies within the complaints system;
 - 6.4.4 Unreasonable arguments - Rejecting all reasonable explanations regardless of evidence, persistently focusing on minor issues to derail resolution and using circular or illogical reasoning.
 - 6.4.5 Unreasonable behaviour - Behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to the circumstances, would see as unnecessary, inappropriate, or that creates a risk to health and safety.
- 6.5 The City may change the way it communicates with complainants. This may include limiting or restricting access to Council staff and buildings for a specific period of time if behaviour or conduct is deemed unreasonable, raises health, safety, resource or equity issues for Council staff and contractors involved in the complaints process. We do this as a last resort and only after we have assessed the impact on both the City, Council staff, other affected parties as well as the needs of a complainant.
- 6.6 Complainants will be advised of any access limitations which are determined by a senior manager and are proportionate to the behaviours displayed and are temporary in nature. A decision to limit access can be reviewed by the Integrity and Review Team at a complainant's request.

Implementation of this Policy

TRAINING

The City provides customer service and complaint handling training to all staff and delivers further role-specific training to teams whose service functions require enhanced complaint management capabilities.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Complaints from people who use or who are affected by our services provide us with valuable feedback about how we are performing.

We will regularly analyse our complaint data to identify trends and potential issues that deserve further attention. We will use this information to improve our services.

We are open and transparent about the complaints we have received and what we have done to resolve them. We will report the number and type of complaints details of complaints to our senior leadership team (quarterly) and on our website annually.

We will use complaint and other data to guide continuous improvement in service delivery.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Customer Service Manager, as the Responsible Officer, is responsible for providing guidance on the application of this Policy.

RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy,

REVIEW

The City will review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within four years of the approval date.

References

This policy has linkages to a range of legislation, Victorian Ombudsman and Council documents including:

- Local Government Act 2020
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Gender Equity Act 2020
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedure
- Fraud Control and Reporting Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Privacy and Health Records Council Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Child Safety Standards Management Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Victorian Ombudsman Publications:

[Councils and complaints – a good practice guide 2nd edition April 2021](#)

[Good practice guide: Managing complex complainant behaviour.](#)

Other Documents

Records Information Management Policy

Complaint Handling Policy

Have Your Say Feedback



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Community consultation on the Draft Complaint Handling Policy was undertaken through the City's Have Your Say platform between 3 and 31 July 2026. The consultation invited community members to review the draft policy and provide feedback on its clarity, fairness, accessibility and the proposed complaint handling principles. A total of 12 submissions were received.

Overall, respondents were supportive of the draft policy and the principles underpinning the City's approach to complaint handling. Most participants indicated that the policy was easy to understand, with 67% rating it as either "easy" or "very easy" to understand.

Feedback demonstrated strong support for the proposed complaint handling commitments. Respondents rated the principles of Commitment and Transparency most highly, with all respondents giving these principles the highest rating. The principles of Accessibility, Accountability and Continuous Improvement also received very strong support, each achieving average ratings above 4.9 out of 5. Respondents similarly indicated strong confidence in the policy's approach to Objectivity and Fairness and Privacy.

While feedback was generally positive, some respondents identified opportunities to further improve the policy's readability and usability. Common suggestions focused on simplifying language, increasing clarity around the complaints process, and ensuring the policy remains accessible to a broad range of community members.

The consultation results indicate broad community support for the Draft Complaint Handling Policy and its commitment to delivering a complaints process that is transparent, accessible, fair and accountable. Feedback received through the engagement process has been considered in finalising the policy for Council's consideration.

HOW WE ENGAGED

WHAT DID WE DO?

The community was invited to provide feedback through a 28-day consultation period hosted on the City's Have Your Say (HYS) page that has more than 3500 subscribers. The project was featured in the quarterly Have Your Say newsletter which is distributed to 4000 subscribers. To maximise awareness and participation, the consultation was promoted on the City of Greater Geelong's Facebook page and an article was published in City News article on Friday 24 July.



28 DAYS

of engagement
via the HYS Page



12

Number of people to leave
feedback



3

People following
the project

DATA METHODOLOGY

This engagement was open to all members of the public for their contribution.

COMMUNICATIONS

The draft Complaint Handling Policy was promoted broadly across the City's channels and included in the community engagement section of City News on 24 July 2026.

SOCIAL MEDIA



3,752
Facebook Reach.

13
Facebook Interactions

229
Instagram Reach

19
Instagram Interactions

1198
LinkedIn Reach

768
LinkedIn Interactions



1

Feature in
City News
sent to
2800+
subscribers

WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

PARTICIPATION

From 3 – 31 July 2026, 127 people visited the engagement page, with 12 community members submitting feedback. The number of page visits and views has been illustrated below:

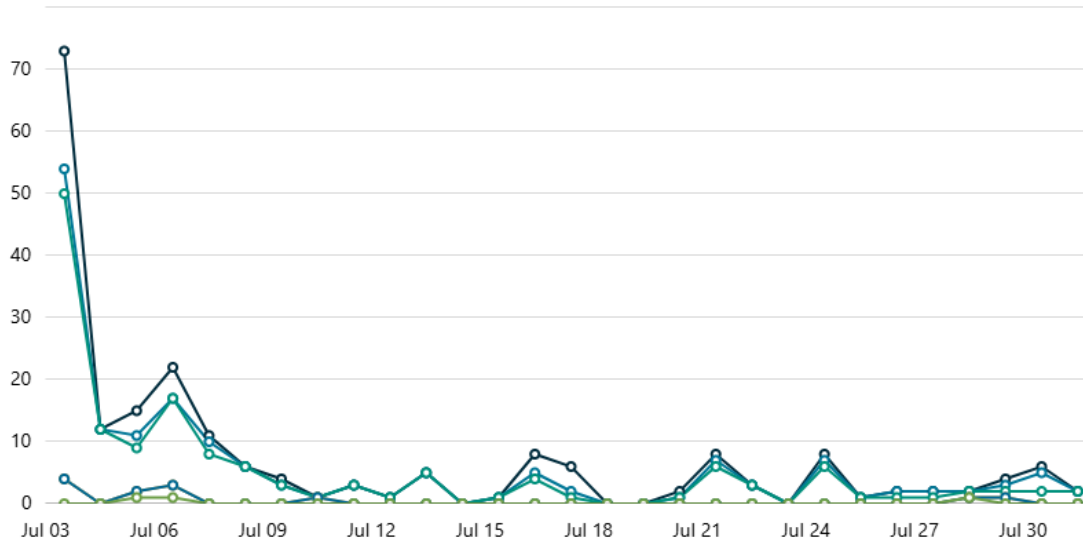


Figure 1: Page Visits & Views

All 12 community members completed the closed and open-ended questions as part of the consultation process, with valuable feedback being left in the open-ended comments sections.

The community were invited to share some demographic data with us, primarily through our HYS page. The following is a snapshot of these people.

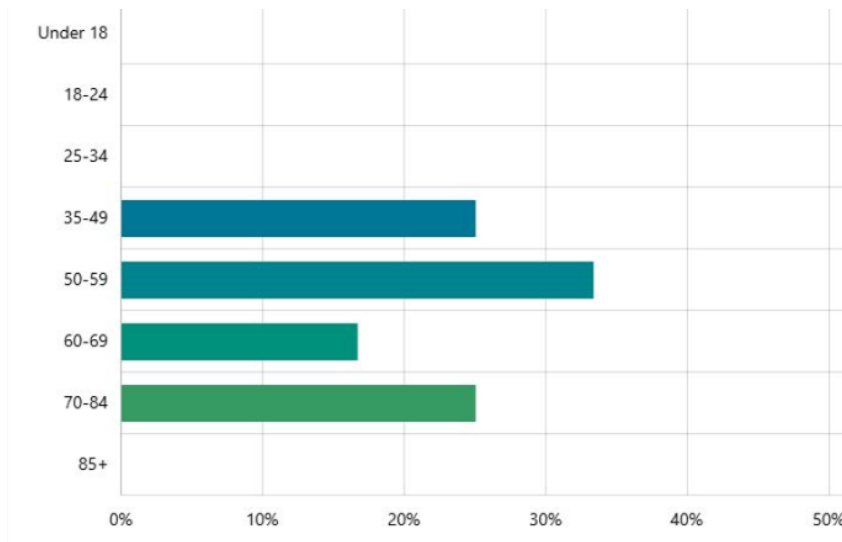


Figure 2: Age

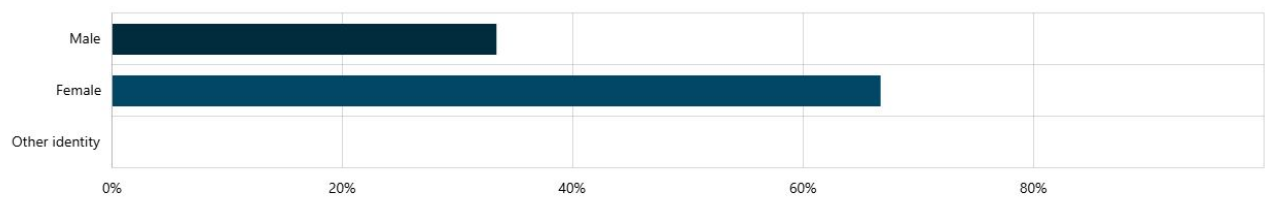


Figure 3: Gender

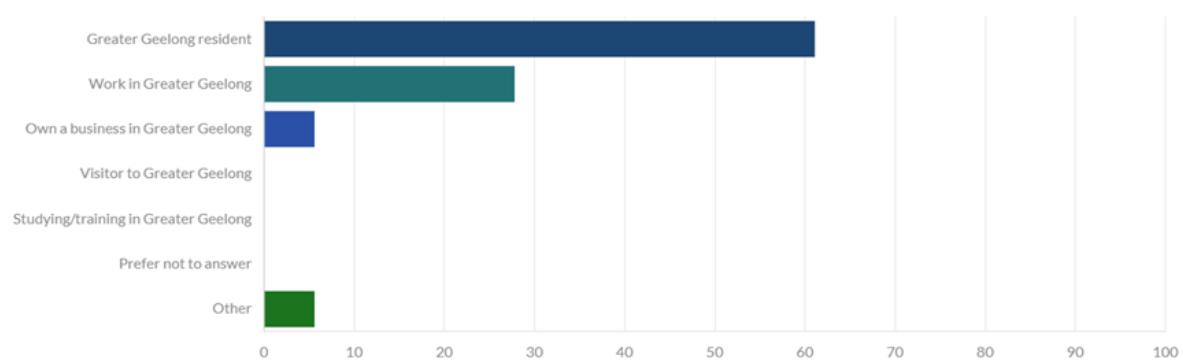


Figure 4: Which best describes you.

WHAT WE HEARD

THE FEEDBACK

The consultation demonstrated broad support for the intent and guiding principles of the Draft Complaint Handling Policy while identifying opportunities to improve clarity, accessibility and process transparency. Community feedback primarily focused on opportunities to improve how the policy is presented and implemented rather than its overall direction.

Respondents requested a simpler and more accessible document, including the use of plain English, visual process maps and alternative formats to support people with varying accessibility needs. Feedback also highlighted the importance of clear communication throughout the complaint process, including acknowledgement of complaints, regular progress updates and transparent explanations of decisions and outcomes.

A number of submissions sought stronger procedural safeguards, particularly around review processes, management of unreasonable complainant conduct, accountability mechanisms and publication of complaint performance information. Participants also emphasised the importance of maintaining opportunities for direct engagement and respectful dialogue between Council and community members.

OVERALL KEY FINDINGS

Community members were invited to rank the useability of the draft policy to determine its suitability and accessibility.

The data told us:

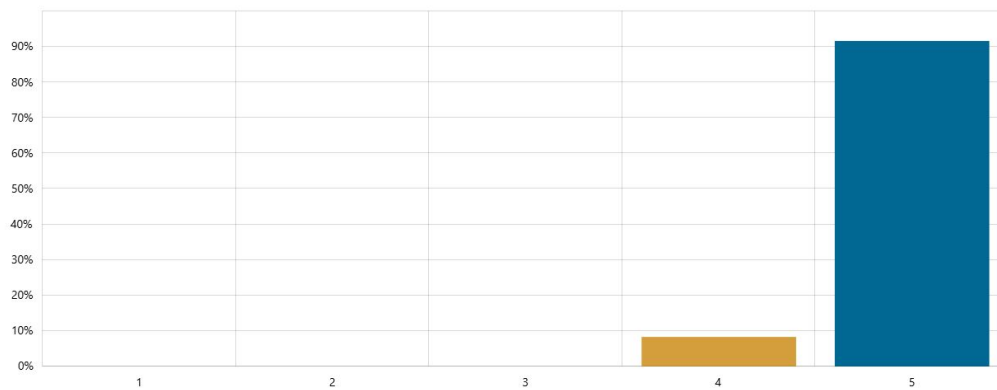
- Respondents provided mixed views regarding **fairness** and **accessibility**, with average ratings of just over 3 out of 5 for both measures. Feedback identified opportunities to improve accessibility and clarity through plain language, alternative formats and clearer process information.
- 66% of respondents found the policy to be **Very Easy** or **Easy** to understand

Community members were then invited to rank the importance of seven proposed Guiding Principles to be included in the revised policy. The feedback from respondents was as follows:

1. **Commitment - We are committed to receiving and resolving complaints. We value complaints and recognise they are part of our core business, serving our community and improving our services.**



2. Accessibility - All people can easily complain, and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process.



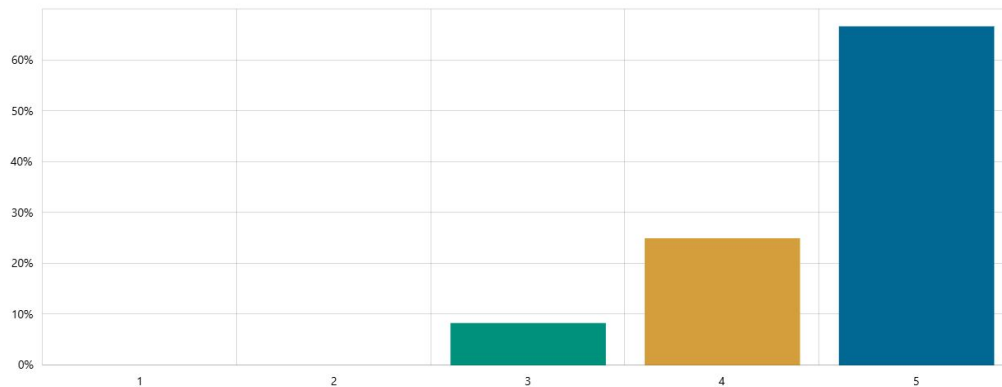
3. Transparency - We make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.



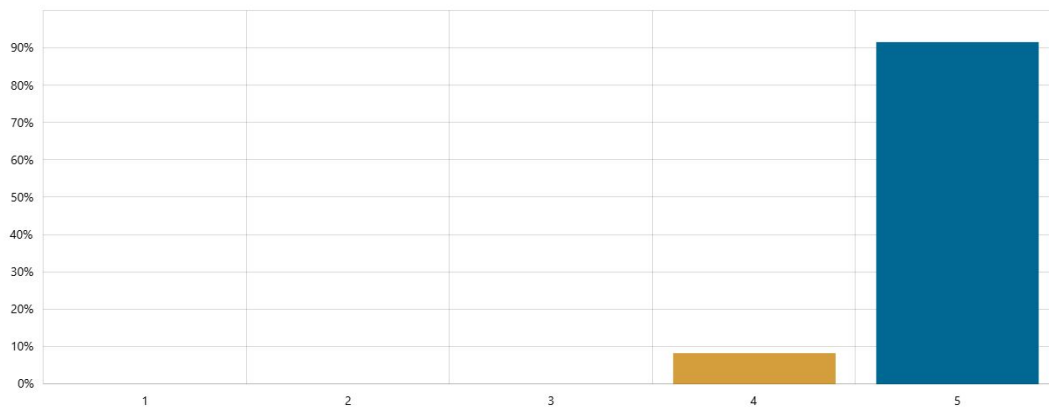
4. Objectivity and fairness - Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit.



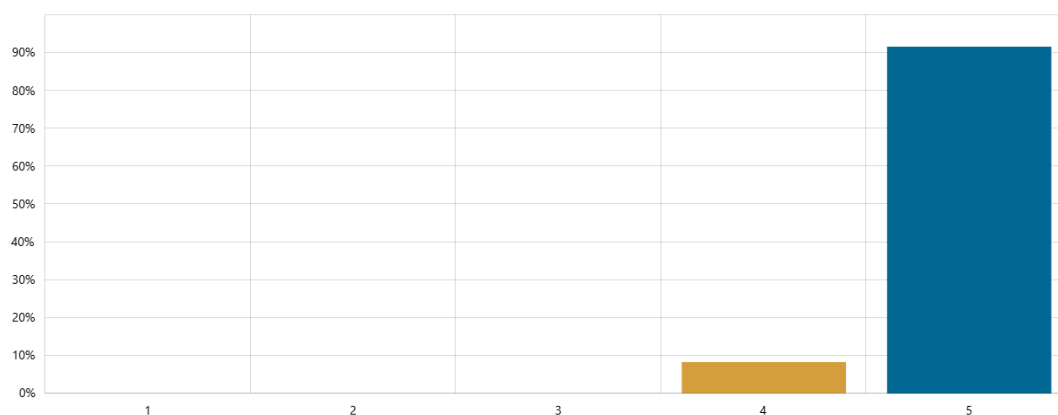
- 5. Privacy - Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation. We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified if reported on more widely.**



- 6. Accountability - We are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling. We provide reasons for decisions and ensure we are open to appropriate review processes.**



- 7. Continuous improvement - Acting on, learning from, and using complaint data helps us identify opportunities for improvement.**



OVERARCHING THEMES

1. Improve clarity and ease of understanding

The most common theme was a desire for simpler, more user-friendly content. Respondents identified opportunities to improve readability through plain language, increasing font size and reducing dense blocks of text. Several respondents suggested the inclusion of summary tables, process maps and flowcharts to assist customers in understanding the complaint process.

2. Greater transparency around processes and timeframes

Many respondents sought clearer information about what happens after a complaint is lodged. Feedback included requests for acknowledgement timeframes, regular progress updates, defined escalation pathways, information about who conducts reviews and clearer explanations when complaints cannot be progressed. Several respondents expressed concern that the proposed 28-business-day timeframes may be too long without interim communication updates.

3. Accessibility and inclusion

Participants emphasised the importance of ensuring the complaints process is accessible to all community members. Suggestions included providing information in alternative formats, making communication options available beyond email, improving support for people with vision impairment, and ensuring review processes can be accessed without creating unnecessary barriers.

4. Fairness, accountability and procedural governance

A number of submissions focused on ensuring the policy provides clear protections and accountability measures for all parties. Respondents suggested strengthening provisions relating to internal reviews, handling unreasonable complainant conduct, evidence-based decision-making, transparency of outcomes and public reporting on complaint performance and trends.

5. Importance of communication and relationship-building

Several respondents highlighted the value of maintaining direct communication between Council, Councillors and community members. Feedback reflected a desire for more opportunities for discussion, explanation of decisions and ongoing engagement to resolve concerns before they escalate to a formal complaint.

PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES BASED ON ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Feedback informed a number of refinements to the final policy, including improved plain language, strengthened accessibility provisions, clearer information regarding complaint handling timeframes and updates, and additional clarification of review and escalation pathways. Specific proposed changes to the policy as a result of engagement are detailed below:

1. Guiding principles have been incorporated into the policy and ordered according to the community's priority of importance;
2. Font size has been increased in-line with government accessibility standards;
3. The community commented that simplification of language and visual aids could be included in the policy, while others sought more detail in how the City manages complaints. A summary of the approach has been included in the 'Complaint Handling Approach' section of the policy and further detail added in the subsequent paragraphs.
4. More detail has been provided to help complainants navigate each level of the complaint handling approach. Additional wording pertaining to timeframes, communication steps, reasons why a complaint may or will not be investigated, the considerations taken into account to help resolve a complaint and a definition of what form a 'resolution' might take has been added.
5. A strong statement of the City's commitment to protecting staff from occupational violence and aggression has been included;
6. The City's commitment to training staff and more detail on the reporting of complaints has also been added to the policy.
7. Stronger procedural governance regarding complaints about staff and decision making to restrict or limit access to services when complainant behaviours necessitate have been included.

NEXT STEPS**NEXT STEPS**

Feedback received through the community consultation process has been reviewed and considered in finalising the Complaint Handling Policy.

The policy has been updated to reflect community feedback, including improvements to clarity, accessibility, transparency and explanations of the complaint handling process.

Strong support for the proposed complaint handling principles has informed the inclusion of the Guiding Principles within the final policy, including Commitment, Accessibility, Transparency, Objectivity and Fairness, Privacy, Accountability and Continuous Improvement.

Feedback regarding communication and transparency has informed additional clarification of complaint handling timeframes, customer updates, review processes and escalation pathways.

The final Complaint Handling Policy will be presented to Council for consideration and adoption.

Subject to Council adoption, the policy will be published on the City's website and implemented across the organisation.

The City will continue to monitor complaints data and customer feedback to identify opportunities for ongoing service improvement and policy review.

2.9. New Privacy & Health Records Policy

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To present the revised Privacy & Health Records Policy for Council adoption.

Background

2. On 24 September 2019 Council adopted a Privacy and Health Records Policy.
3. That Policy is now due for review.

Key Matters

4. The City's management of personal information is governed by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* which requires compliance with the Information Privacy Principles and the publication of clearly expressed policies.
5. The City must comply with the Information Privacy Principles.
6. Similar obligations apply under the *Health Records Act 2001* in relation to health information.
7. Together, these Acts require the City to maintain publicly available documents outlining how personal and health information is collected, used, disclosed, stored, accessed, corrected, and destroyed, and how privacy complaints are managed.
8. The existing Privacy & Health Records Policy was adopted by Council on 24 September 2019. The existing Policy has now been reviewed.
9. The revised Privacy & Health Records Policy is **attached**.
10. The revised Policy gives effect to the City's obligations under both the *Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*, and is confined to setting out the City's approach in accordance with the applicable Information Privacy Principles and Health Privacy Principles. It does not introduce additional discretionary standards beyond legislative requirements.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Revokes the Privacy & Health Records Policy adopted on 24 September 2019**
2. **Adopts the revised Privacy & Health Records Policy (Attachment 1).**

Financial Sustainability

11. There are no budgetary impacts in relation to the revision Privacy & Health Records Policy.

Community Engagement

12. As a statutory requirement, no community consultation was conducted in relation to the revised Privacy & Health Records Policy.
13. Internal consultation was carried out with City officers in People & Culture, Family Services, Community Care, Digital & Information Technology, Customer Services and Community Safety & Regulation, who all provided input into the revised Policy.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. The revised Privacy & Health Records Policy supports the City's commitment to social equity by promoting transparency, accountability and fair treatment in the handling of personal and information. By setting out clearly how information is collected, use, disclosed and protected, the Policy helps build trust within the community, including vulnerable and diverse cohorts who may be more sensitive to privacy risks.
15. The Policy reinforces good governance practice and responsible information management which are foundations to the City's broad social sustainability objectives.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

16. A Gender Impact Assessment under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* was not undertaken for revised Privacy & Health Records Policy. The Policy sets out the City's compliance obligations under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*, and governs how personal and health information is collected, stored, secured and disclosed. It applies uniformly to all individuals regardless of gender and does not involve discretionary decision making that could result in differential impacts. On this basis, the revised Policy was assessed as administrative and compliance focused in nature, rather than a policy that has a direct and significant impact on the public within the meaning of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

17. The City is required to have policies in place that set out how it manages personal information under the *Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.
18. The revised Privacy & Health Records Policy has been drafted to meet the City's statutory obligations.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

19. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority: Governance and Integrity
20. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration: Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

21. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

22. Council has a cautious appetite for regulatory, legal and governance risks.
23. The revised Privacy & Health Records Policy aligns with the City's cautious risk appetite in relation to this risk.
24. The revised Policy reflects current obligations under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001* and has been updated to ensure the City's practices for collecting, storing, and disclosing personal and health information remain compliant with these Acts.

Environmental Sustainability

25. There are no environmental or sustainability issues connected with the revised Policy.

Attachments

1. Privacy Health Records Policy [2.9.1 - 11 pages]

D26-226687THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PRIVACY & HEALTH RECORDS POLICY

VERSION:	2
TYPE OF POLICY:	Council
APPROVER	Council
APPROVAL DATE:	[TBC]
REVIEW DATE:	[TBC]
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Legal Officer

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Introduction

PURPOSE

This Policy sets out:

- the City's policies on its management of Personal Information, including Health Information, for the purposes of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic); and
- explains how the City collects, uses and discloses Personal Information and Health Information of individuals, how individuals can gain access to their information and correct inaccuracies, and how an individual may complain about possible breaches of their privacy,

ensuring compliance with our obligations as set out in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all City Officers and Councillors.

A separate privacy website statement applies to the collection, use and disclosure of information via the City's website.

External contractors that have been engaged to provide a service or function on behalf of the City will have the same obligations as the City under this Policy.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
City	The City of Greater Geelong organisation, led by the CEO.
City Officers	Includes employees, volunteers and contractors.
Consent	means express consent or implied consent. Implied consent is consent that can be inferred by the actions of the person from whom the consent is sought.
Council	The City of Greater Geelong Council comprised of elected councillors and led by the Mayor.
ELT	The Executive Leadership Team of the City, as constituted from time to time.
Health Information	has the same meaning as given in the <i>Health Records Act 2001</i> (Vic).
Health Service Provider	has the same meaning as given in the <i>Health Records Act 2001</i> (Vic).
Personal Information	means information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), that is recorded in any form and whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.
Public Register	has the same meaning as given in the <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> (Vic).
Sensitive Information	means personal information that is information or an opinion about an individual's: • racial or ethnic origin; • political opinions; • membership of a political association; • religious beliefs or affiliation; • philosophical beliefs; • membership of a professional trade association; • membership of a trade union; • sexual orientation or practices; and

Term	Definition
------	------------

- criminal record.
-

Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The City values the privacy of every individual and is committed to handling Personal Information in accordance with the privacy principles contained in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

2. PERSONAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 The City holds the following types of Personal Information:
- 2.1.1 Name, address, contact details, and financial information of residents and ratepayers for undertaking its rating and valuation services, town planning and building statutory functions and other property related services.
 - 2.1.2 Name, address and contact details of individuals who contact the City with respect to requests or complaints related to services and in petitions.
 - 2.1.3 Name, address and contact details of individuals who are the subject of complaints, investigations and/or enforcement action.
 - 2.1.4 Images of individuals on closed circuit television systems in operation and body worn cameras in use and in photographs taken at City events.
 - 2.1.5 Information collected by the City when providing maternal and child health, and in-home community care services.
 - 2.1.6 Health Information and Sensitive Information about children in the course of providing child care services.
 - 2.1.7 Personal Information, Sensitive Information and where relevant, Health Information of employees (both current and prospective), consultants and contracted service providers relevant to their employment or contract with the City.
 - 2.1.8 Employee tax file numbers, which are governed by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

3. COLLECTION

- 3.1 The City collects Personal Information for the purposes of carrying out its functions and activities. This includes its statutory functions under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and other legislation, and the administration of the City and the municipality.
- 3.2 The City collects Personal Information in a number of ways, including:
- 3.2.1 directly from the individual, such as on forms or in correspondence;
 - 3.2.2 from third parties, such as contracted service providers, health service providers or an individual's authorised representatives or legal advisers;
 - 3.2.3 from publicly available sources of information; and/or
 - 3.2.4 when legally required or authorised to do so.
- 3.3 The City will generally only collect Personal Information or Health Information about a child under the age of 18 with the Consent of the child's parent or guardian. This may not be the case where it is

considered this may hinder the delivery of services to a young person or the child demonstrates it has capacity to Consent to the collection of Personal Information or Health Information.

- 3.4 Photographs are at times taken on the City's premises and in public places. The photographs may be used by the City for publicity or for enforcement purposes. Where practicable consent will be obtained through a photo release and permission form. When photographs are taken in a public space (for example: during a community event) and obtaining individual Consent is not practicable, the City will use other methods to inform individuals that photographs are being taken and how they will be used. The other methods could include signs or a public announcement. These methods will inform the individual that the photo may be taken, and the individual has the opportunity to approach and advise City staff or the photographer that they do not want the photos to be used.

4. USE AND DISCLOSURE

- 4.1 The City will use Personal Information for the primary purpose for which it was collected (for example, levying rates, billing, collection of debts, property valuation, town planning and building approvals, provision of children and family services, aged services, animal management services, and waste management services, enforcement activities and asset management).
- 4.2 The City may also use Personal Information for related purposes individuals would reasonably expect, where the individual has Consented, for law enforcement purposes and any other circumstances permitted by the privacy laws applicable to the City.
- 4.3 The information may be disclosed for these same purposes.
- 4.4 For example, the information may be disclosed:
- 4.4.1 to the City's contracted service providers;
 - 4.4.2 to authorities (e.g. VicRoads, utilities) for purposes such as notification of works affecting residents;
 - 4.4.3 to other statutory bodies (e.g. Centrelink, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Health, Disability and Aging, Department of Education, and WorkSafe) for purposes required or authorised by relevant legislation;
 - 4.4.4 in connection with the investigation of complaints or alleged unlawful activity;
 - 4.4.5 to bodies such as the Police and the State Emergency Service (SES) for emergency or law enforcement purposes;
 - 4.4.6 in public registers that need to be maintained in accordance with legislation, such as the planning register, building register, swimming pools and spa register, and domestic animals register (some of which are online);
 - 4.4.7 to an individual's authorised representatives, health service providers or legal advisers;
 - 4.4.8 to the City's professional advisers, including accountants, auditors, insurers, bankers, valuers, debt collection agents, IT providers and lawyers;
 - 4.4.9 to the Police as part of background checks and to referees in connection with an employment application process;
 - 4.4.10 to verify an individual's identity;
 - 4.4.11 to an immediate family member of the individual, for emergency reasons or if it is necessary to provide the appropriate care or health service to the individual;
 - 4.4.12 to animal shelters, the RSPCA, Animal Welfare Victoria, Australian Animal Registry and Central Animal Records for animal management purposes; and

- 4.4.13 as authorised or required by law under the Child Information Sharing Scheme established by the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme created by Part 5A of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic).
- 4.5 Personal Information provided as part of a public submission to a Council meeting may be included with the published agenda papers and minutes of the meeting, which are displayed online.
- 4.6 The City may use artificial intelligence (**AI**) to improve services, support decision-making, and increase efficiency. Examples of AI used by the City include AI chatbots for customer inquiries, and using generative AI when drafting documents, performing spreadsheet calculations, sorting and summarising information, and translating content to and from foreign languages.

5. DATA QUALITY AND SECURITY

- 5.1 The City relies on individuals to provide accurate and current information in the first instance.
- 5.2 The City also relies on individuals to inform the City of changes to their details.
- 5.3 The City uses a number of procedural, physical, software and hardware safeguards to protect information from misuse and loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure, including access controls, secure methods of communication, and back up and disaster recovery systems.
- 5.4 The City conducts data matching periodically to ensure accurate name records are maintained on individual customers.

6. ACCESS AND CORRECTION

- 6.1 Individuals may request access to, or correction of, their Personal information. Such requests are usually managed under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic).
- 6.2 Requests must be made in writing and addressed to privacy@geelongcity.vic.gov.au.

7. UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS

- 7.1 A unique identifier a number assigned by an organisation to an individual uniquely to identify that individual. The City only assigns identifiers if it is considered necessary to enable the City to carry out a function efficiently.

8. ANONYMITY

- 8.1 Where practicable and lawful, individuals may choose to remain anonymous when contacting the City, for example when making general inquiries about services. In some cases, if individuals wish to maintain anonymity, the City may not be able to provide services or respond to complaints.

9. TRANSBORDER DATA FLOWS

- 9.1 An individual's Personal Information may be transferred outside Victoria where:
 - 9.1.1 the individual Consents;
 - 9.1.2 the recipient of the information is subject to a law, binding scheme or contract which is substantially similar to the privacy laws applicable to the City; or
 - 9.1.3 otherwise permitted under the applicable privacy laws.

10. RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION

- 10.1 The City retains Personal Information and Health Information only for as long as it is required for the purpose for which it was collected, or as otherwise required by law.
- 10.2 The City manages the retention and disposal of records containing Personal Information and Health Information in accordance with applicable legislation, records management standards and authorised retention and disposal authorities.
- 10.3 Where Personal Information or Health Information is no longer required and the applicable retention period has expired, the City will take reasonable steps to securely destroy or personal de-identify the Personal Information or Health Information, unless the information is required to be retained by law or for a lawful purpose.
- 10.4 The City will implement appropriate administrative, physical and technical measures to ensure that Personal Information is disposed of securely and protected from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, modification or loss during its retention period.

11. HEALTH SERVICES

- 11.1 Information given in confidence to the City in its capacity as a Health Service Provider will be handled in accordance with its legal obligations.
- 11.2 If the City ceases to provide one of its Health Services, the City will provide prior notice of the closure and how it proposes to deal with the Health Information held.
- 11.3 An individual may request a Health Service Provider to make Health Information available to another Health Service Provider.

12. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY

- 12.1 A breach of this Policy may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter under the relevant Code of Conduct.

13. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT OR ENQUIRY CONCERNING PRIVACY

- 13.1 Individuals may lodge a complaint or enquiry with the City regarding the handling of personal information.
- 13.2 A privacy complaint can be made using our [online form](#).
- 13.3 Alternatively, complaints can be mailed to:

Complaints Officer
City of Greater Geelong
PO Box 104 Geelong 3220
- 13.4 Individuals may also lodge a complaint with the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner with respect to Personal Information, or the Office of the Health Complaints Commissioner for Health Information. However, the Commissioners may decline to entertain the complaint, if the complainant has not first complained to the City.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Corporate Legal & Compliance Team is responsible for implementing this Policy.

Reporting to the Audit & Risk Committee on policy breaches occurs quarterly.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer is responsible for providing guidance on the application of this Policy.

RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy

REVIEW

The City should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within two years of the Approval Date.

References

Legislation

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)

Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) and *Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018* (Vic)

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and *Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018* (Vic)

Victorian Data Sharing Act 2017 (Vic)

Other Documents

Records & Information Management Policy

Corporate Policy Guide

Employee Code of Conduct

Managing Conduct Policy

3. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Summary

1. The Governance Rules of the City of Greater Geelong require the tabling of records of informal meetings of Councillors at the next convenient Council meeting and that their record be included in the minutes of that Council meeting.
2. A summary of the informal meetings of Councillors is attached.

Recommendation

That Council receive the summary of the informal meetings of Councillors for the period to 22 September 2026.

**INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
(Council Meeting 22 September 2026)**

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Veteran Affairs Portfolio 1 September 2026	Cr S Kontelj Cr M Cadwell Cr C Burson Apology Cr R Story	A Basford (EXEC DIR) F Ballard (MGR) B Sanders (MGR) M McKay (MGR) R Matthews (COORD) E Chapman (OFFICER)	• TPI Memorial. • Ex Service Organisation Survey. • Military Plaques. • War Memorial Kindergarten.	• Nil
Additional Briefing 1 September 2026	Cr E Wilkinson	J Randles (A/EXEC DIR) K Shearer (MGR) R Jones (SNR OFFICER) C Faulman (SNR OFFICER)	• Creamery Road PSP and the Environmentally Sustainable Development provisions.	• Nil

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Councillor Briefing 8 September 2026	Cr S Kontelj Cr M Cadwell Cr R Nelson Cr E Wilkinson Cr E Sinclair Cr C Burson Cr R Story Cr A Katos	A Wastie (CEO) A Basford (EXEC DIR) J Randles (A/EXEC DIR) J Stirton (EXEC DIR) A Martin (CHIEF) S Beck (MGR) D Pangrazio (OFFICER) A Locke (MGR) A Stebbing (MGR) J Richardson (MGR) J McIvor-Clarke (OFFICER)	• SSL Service Review. • Capital Delivery Program Update. • Draft Public Realm Framework. • Naming Northern Bellarine Aquatic Centre. • Place Naming Policy. • Draft Integrated Transport Strategy. • Draft Public Tree Management Policy. • Council Plan Biannual Report – June 2026. • Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Year 1 2025-26 Annual Report. • Complaint Handling Policy. • New Privacy and Health Records Policy. • Preparation of the 2025-26 Annual Report – Draft Financial Statements and Draft Performance Statement.	• Nil
Social & Affordable Housing Portfolio 8 September 2026	Cr E Sinclair Cr E Wilkinson	A Wastie (CEO) J Randles (EXEC DIR) K Shearer (MGR) D Greaves (MGR) D Bushell (OFFICER)	• Discussion – Social Housing.	• Nil

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Additional Briefing 11 September 2026	Cr E Sinclair	J Randles (EXEC DIR) M McKay (MGR) S Cramer (COORD)	Public art approach and update on the Biyala artwork in Armstrong Creek.	Nil
Additional Briefing 10 September 2026	Cr C Burson	J Randles (EXEC DIR) M McKay (MGR) L Griffiths (COORD) I Inei (OFFICER) D Sonksen de Siqueira (OFFICER)	- Lara Beautification. - Lara Town Centre improvements. 5-way intersection Patullos Rd improvements. - Chirnside Park Master Plan update.	Nil
Health Portfolio Meeting 11 September 2026	Cr M Cadwell Cr R Story	A Basford (EXEC DIR) F Ballard (MGR) J Thomas (MGR) S Maillet (MGR) B Johnson (OFFICER)	- Medically supervised injecting center. - Maternal and Child Health Funding. - Food Environment Planning Reform. - Mosquito Management. - Avian Influenza.	Nil

4. CLOSE OF MEETING