

# Council Plan **Action Plan 2025/26**

# Introduction

The Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 is a shared roadmap for the future and will guide our work for the next 4 years. This plan marks a new direction for Council as we embrace change and seek to create a resilient and future-ready organisation.

Each year, Council will also create a plan called Council Plan Action Plan, which explains the key initiatives we will deliver to achieve our strategic objectives and respond to the changing needs of the community.

The Council Plan Action Plan 2025/26 should be read together with the Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029. There is also a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Action Plan 2025/26, which can also be read on its own.

The Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 and Council Plan Action Plan 2025/26 meet all the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)* (the Act) which requires Councils to develop a Council Plan every 4 years following Council elections.

Actions with this icon (MI) show a connection to a Major Initiative listed in the Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 and the Budget 2025/26.

This plan is accurate at the time of printing and Whitehorse City Council reserves the right to make changes.



## Strategic Direction 1

# Community



Community is about making sure people can easily meet and connect with others and feel they belong. It's about being active, having fun, making people feel welcome and respected.

We foster these connections through recognising our shared experiences and unique differences. Our community thrives when people feel safe, healthy, and valued. Through partnerships and thoughtful initiatives, we build connection, promote wellbeing, and create the foundation for a city where everyone can participate, contribute, and find their place.

### Objective 1.1: An involved and connected community ♥

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#### 2025/26 Council Plan Actions:

- Conduct a review of Council's **Outdoor Event Framework** to maximise the efficiency of Council's permitting process to host public events in open space.
- Deliver the **Community Voices Project** to provide an inclusive and engaging experience for seniors and the broader community.
- Partner with community organisations to **activate new and innovative ways to engage young people** and support them to access relevant information and referrals.
- Implement a **Community Funding Accelerator Program** to increase education on grants for community.

### Objective 1.2: A community that fosters social inclusion, cohesion and respect

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#### 2025/26 Council Plan Actions:

- Create a **Multicultural Advisory Committee** to create a new way for culturally diverse community members to have a formal voice to Council.

### Objective 1.3: A healthy and active community ♥

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#### 2025/26 Council Plan Actions:

- *Actions listed under the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Action Plan 2025/26.*

### Objective 1.4: A community where people feel safe

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#### 2025/26 Council Plan Actions:

- Establish a **Community Safety Crime Prevention Committee** to work collaboratively with safety partners across the Municipality **MI**.

## Strategic Direction 2

### Built



The spaces we create shape how we live, move, and interact. Our built environment reflects our values of accessibility, safety, and sustainability. Through thoughtful design, we craft public spaces that invite activity and connection while providing infrastructure that makes daily movement easier for everyone. We focus on doing the basics well, like fixing roads, filling potholes, and maintaining footpaths, while preserving important open spaces where everyone can feel safe.

We look beyond today, planning for growing populations and changing needs, creating versatile facilities that serve multiple purposes, are highly used and adapt over time. The character of our neighbourhoods, the functionality of our shared spaces, and the resilience of our infrastructure all contribute to a city that works for its people now and into the future.

#### Objective 2.1: **Safe and accessible public places**

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##### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Create a **priority list of public spaces to review** for safe and easy access.
- **Enhance and upgrade pedestrian and cycling paths** across the municipality to encourage active transport uptake by the Community.
- Deliver the **Cycling Strategy** recommendations to promote healthy living outcomes **MI**.
- Develop a **Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy** (including walking and cycling) to guide Council in delivering advocacy, programs and services **MI**.
- Implement the **Connect with Confidence - Public Transport Community Education Program** for older people to improve confidence and overcome barriers to use public transport.

#### Objective 2.2: **Community facilities and shared spaces are well used**

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##### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Prepare **Koonung Park Master Plan** to guide the park's renewal and improvements over the next 15 years **MI**.
- Review Council's approach to the management of **privately constructed buildings on Council land**.
- Review and update the **Sporting Facilities Guidelines** to promote increased community use and accessibility.

### Objective 2.3: **Sustainable planning and infrastructure to respond to population change**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Undertake the statutory process following the adoption of the **Whitehorse Open Space Strategy** **MI**.
- Review and revise Council's **Housing Strategy** to ensure currency and alignment with the Plan for Victoria.
- Endorsement of the **Community Infrastructure Plan** to help guide Council's investment in community facilities over the next 20 years **MI**.
- Advocate for community needs in **Suburban Rail Loop precinct structure planning** process to ensure that the future needs of our community are considered **MI**.
- Review the **Municipal Emergency Management Plan** to ensure a focus on greater density living.
- Implement **Planning Scheme Provision** changes following the Municipal Flood Modelling.

### Objective 2.4: **A desirable and well-presented City**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Implement **streetscape and drainage improvement** across the municipality, for example Hamilton Street and Vermont East Shopping Strip upgrades.
- Establish a **cross functional improvement team** to combat, measure and report dumped rubbish.

## Strategic Direction 3

# Economy



A thriving economy creates opportunity, fosters innovation, and builds prosperity. Local businesses and industry form the backbone of our economic landscape: they create jobs, provide essential services, and give our area its unique character. We understand that economic health requires both stability and adaptability, supporting established businesses while nurturing new ventures and encouraging investments.

Through education, employment pathways, and strategic investment, we contribute to an economy that's resilient to change and accessible to everyone. When we strengthen our local economy, we create a community where people can live, work, study, volunteer and fulfil their aspirations close to home. This is how we position ourselves to thrive in tomorrow's economy.

### Objective 3.1: **A thriving local economy**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Deliver a **business training and mentoring calendar** that provides opportunities for businesses to learn and grow.
- Partner with Business and Trader Associations in Whitehorse to deliver **initiatives for the business community to network and celebrate** and recognise business excellence.
- Review Council's **Procurement Policy** and procurement activities, including holding workshops, to maximise potential Whitehorse investment into local businesses.
- Design a **local trader marketing program**, which focuses on individual businesses and activity centres which encourages local spend.
- Develop a **prioritisation approach for streetscape improvements**.
- Develop a **Whitehorse Visitor and Tourism Strategy**.

### Objective 3.2: **Local businesses supported through change**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Partner with Business and Trader Associations and key stakeholders to **deliver training which supports navigating disruption and change**.
- Work with the State Government to monitor and provide strong support for businesses, employees and customers **displaced and impacted by Suburban Rail Loop** .

### Objective 3.3: **Diverse education, employment and volunteering opportunities**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Partner with **Eastern Volunteers** to establish a **Whitehorse Volunteering Navigation Hub** to serve as a central resource, connecting community members with meaningful volunteer opportunities that match their skills and interests.
- Improve Council's **Student Placement and Work Experience** offering **M**.
- Implement a **Council apprenticeship and traineeship program** **M**.
- Facilitate connections between higher education, vocational education, training providers and local businesses to **promote industry and employment opportunities** **M**.
- Scope and initiate a **Deakin Memorandum of Understanding** to enhance collaboration and maximise opportunities for students and graduates **M**.
- **Provision of public library services** that support equitable and inclusive access to and use of information, knowledge systems and community spaces.

### Objective 3.4: **A city that attracts investment and jobs**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Establish a **business concierge program** to improve the customer experience when navigating through Council's permit system **M**.
- Facilitate the **activation of markets in Box Hill and Mitcham** to attract evening attendance into these two activity centres.
- Identify future placemaking projects and spaces for placemaking to **activate key activity centres**, including initiatives that enhance the public realm and increase local utilisation.
- Develop an **Investment Strategy** with view to increase investment, identify potential industries and reach out to investors.

## Strategic Direction 4

# Natural



Our natural spaces provide more than beauty. They sustain life, clean our air, cool our streets, and nourish our wellbeing. We recognise that healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are essential partners in creating a liveable city, which becomes increasingly important with a growing population.

Trees, waterways, parks, and wildlife corridors form a green network that supports both nature and people. We face environmental challenges that require both immediate action and long-term planning. By protecting and enhancing our natural environment, we create a more climate resilient, sustainable city where both community and nature can flourish together for generations to come.

### Objective 4.1: **Enhanced and protected natural and green spaces**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Continue to deliver **North East Link funded tree planting** of local indigenous trees to offset trees removed as part of the Victorian Government project **M1**.
- Advocate for **improved open spaces for the community** as part of the State Government's North East Link project **M1**.
- Coordinate the **Whitehorse National Tree Day planting event** in collaboration with the local community to provide the opportunity to be involved with an environmental project with great impact.
- Facilitate workshops to **grow existing and create new 'friends of' groups** **M1**.

### Objective 4.2: **An environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient city** ♻️

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Develop an **Emissions Reduction Plan** for Council operations to work towards reducing emissions including energy efficiency, electrification, renewable energy and fleet opportunities.

### Objective 4.3: **A Council that responsibly and sustainably manages waste**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Finalise Council's **kerbside bin transition plan** to implement this legislative service change **M1**.



## Strategic Direction 5

# Governance



Good governance is the foundation that supports everything we do as a Council. It means making decisions openly, managing resources wisely, and always being accountable to the community we serve. We understand that effective governance requires both listening and acting. Hearing diverse community voices and translating that feedback into meaningful outcomes.

Services that are accessible, adaptable, and deliver real value reflect our commitment to continuous improvement. Through responsible and sustainable financial management and strong advocacy, we secure the resources for today and the future, needed to fulfil community priorities. Good governance isn't just about following rules. It's about earning trust through actions that consistently put community interest first.

### Objective 5.1: **An open, transparent, accountable and responsible Council**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Improve access on Council's website to **Council registers and information** prescribed under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Objective 5.2: **A Council that delivers core services that are fit for purpose and good value**

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#### **2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Create **Customer Commitments** that reflect service standards and customer expectations **MI**.
- Plan and deliver **technologies that improve processes and the customer experience** **MI**.
- Deliver **service reviews** to ensure Council services meet the changing needs of the community and explore collaborative service delivery options, including with regional partners.
- Determine the **Whitehorse Manningham Libraries Governance Model** in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 to plan for the future governance arrangements for the provision of library services.
- Undertake a **review of Neighbourhood Houses** to determine the most effective way to provide services for the community.

Objective 5.3: **A Council that actively engages with the community for genuine feedback and input**

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**2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Host a **creative think tank** to engage young people to solve real life challenges (e.g. Hack-a-thon).
- Roll out an **improved 'close the loop' process for Council community engagements** to provide community members with regular communication and project updates.

Objective 5.4: **A Council that is well governed, efficient and financially sustainable**

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**2025/26 Council Plan Actions:**

- Deliver **transformative initiatives that continuously improve our operations** with an ongoing commitment to delivering improvement projects with reportable benefits to the community.
- Develop Council's **Strategic Property Framework and Roadmap** to support Council in making decisions to improve the utilisation and management of its property portfolio **MI**.

# Monitoring and reporting

To facilitate transparency and accountability, the actions listed in this annual Action Plan will be reported back to the community on a quarterly basis in the Whitehorse Quarterly Performance Report (QPR).

Strategic Indicators will be reported on in the Quarter 2 QPR and in the Annual Report. While the Annual Report is prepared at the conclusion of each financial year and available online after formal Council adoption, each QPR is made available on Council’s website after being presented to Council for each quarter of the financial year.

You can find all of Council’s Quarterly Performance Reports here:  
[www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/performance-reports](http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/performance-reports)

