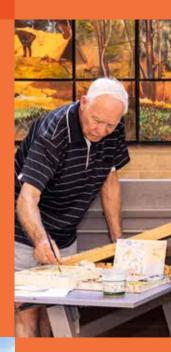


WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

Advocacy Priorities

September 2025





Councillors



Cr Kieran Simpson Cootamundra Ward 0431 486 849 Kieran.Simpson@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Daniel Griffiths
Eley Ward
0431 486 455
Daniel.Griffiths@
whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Blair Barker Elgar Ward 0459 857 280 Blair.Barker@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Kirsten Langford Kingsley Ward 0423 445 390 Kirsten.Langford@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Hayley Weller Lake Ward 0431 486 836 Hayley.Weller@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Jason Martin Mahoneys Ward 0431 486 973 Jason.Martin@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Peter Allan Sparks Ward 0423 504 325 Peter.Allan@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Jarrod Gunn
Terrara Ward
0431 487 348
Jarrod.Gunn@
whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Ben Stennett Walker Ward 0448 375 937 Ben.Stennett@ whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Andrew Davenport
Mayor,
Wattle Ward
0407 652 145
Andrew.Davenport@
whitehorse.vic.gov.au



Cr Prue Cutts
Deputy Mayor,
Simpson Ward
0409 867 540
Prue.Cutts@
whitehorse.vic.gov.au

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Council welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with all levels of governments to deliver great outcomes for Whitehorse and beyond

Located 15 kilometres east of central Melbourne, the municipality of Whitehorse is well recognised as a highly diverse community. Whitehorse has more than 150 cultures represented with a greater proportion of residents born overseas (42%) compared with Greater Melbourne (36%). Victoria's population is expected to grow from 6.5 million (in 2021) to 10.3 million by 2051 with the population for the City of Whitehorse forecast to increase substantially.

Whitehorse is home to an estimated population of 183,462 residents, supports more than 87,000 local jobs and has an annual economic output of approximately \$21.6 billion. The construction industry sector makes the greatest contribution to economic output in the region, which at \$3.1 billion accounts for 13.81% of total output.

With 12,183 jobs representing 14.6% of total employment, the health care and social assistance industry sector is the region's largest employer.

Population impacts

The intense development underway will have many implications for the current and future needs of the City. The State Government's housing target for additional dwellings in Whitehorse is 79,000. It is expected to particularly impact Box Hill and Burwood, with State Government Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) Precinct Visions outlining significant growth in these suburbs. The SRL Precinct Visions indicate that building heights could increase up to 40 storeys at the centre of Box Hill and up to 20 storeys near the Burwood SRL station.



The significant increase in population will put pressure on Council's ageing infrastructure. Council will need to upgrade or build community facilities, including leisure and recreation services, to support the proposed population growth and will need to help facilitate open space options for the community.

Partnering with Whitehorse

Whitehorse is eager to engage in creative and constructive partnerships with the federal and state governments, as well as neighbouring local government authorities (LGAs). We aspire to think big and pursue projects that yield benefits beyond our municipal boundaries. We have projects ready for collaboration and opportunities to engage on a larger scale.

Whitehorse profile:

- Population: 178,639
- Land area: 64.24 square kilometres
- Eligible voters (citizens aged 18+): 59.8%
- Top 3 age cohorts: 35-49 year olds (20.5%), 25-34 year olds (14%), 50-59 year olds (12.4%)
- Population born overseas: 42% (compared with 36% across Greater Melbourne)
- Languages spoken at home other than English: Mandarin 16.2%, Cantonese 5.5%, Greek 2.2%
- University degree qualified: 42% (compared with 33% across Greater Melbourne)

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021)



Nunawading Indoor Sports Centre

Nunawading Basketball Centre is the main venue for clubs in the Melbourne East Basketball Association (MEBA), one of the oldest and most successful basketball associations in Australia, with more than 16,000 participants weekly. Many Australian Olympic and World Championship representatives have come through Nunawading Basketball's programs and competitions – more than any other association in the country.

The centre, now more than 55 years old, hosts more than 20,000 basketball games annually and welcomes more than 1,000,000 visitors each year. The Nunawading Spectres annual long weekend tournament attracts 1031 teams with 408 coming from interstate. The Nunawading Basketball Centre has a very high average occupancy rate of 87.92%. An independent Visitor Impact Assessment conducted in 2023 found the visitor spend generated by the Spectres' tournament supports 219 ongoing jobs and \$54 million in gross revenue across Greater Melbourne.

Nunawading Basketball participation levels are consistently among the highest of all associations in Australia. Junior basketball participation has grown more than 30% since 2021 and women's and girls' participation has grown by 11% since 2021. The existing 5 courts are at capacity and are non-compliant with insufficient run-off areas. There is a current lack of spectator seating and amenities to host national and other major events.

Council's Indoor Sports Feasibility Study 2020 found that participation in basketball in Whitehorse was projected to grow more than any other indoor sport, but was constrained by existing facilities having reached capacity.

The redevelopment of the stadium into the Nunawading Indoor Sports Centre will support community health and wellbeing outcomes by providing diverse indoor sports programming, including:

- meeting the high participation demands for community basketball and other indoor sports, including netball and badminton, from entry to elite level
- hosting regional tournaments and events
- a performance training hub for elite basketball athletes and teams
- supporting additional programs such as SEDA College and Adaptive Sports
- adequate office space to support operations of Nunawading Basketball, SEDA and Special Olympics





PROBLEM



Participation growth



Ageing and insufficient facility



Courts are at capacity

SOLUTION





New multi use indoor sports stadium (indicatively 10 courts).



Partnership with City of Whitehorse, Nunawading Basketball, Basketball Victoria and state and federal governments in funding and delivery.

Nunawading Indoor Sports Centre funding opportunities

Council's contribution: \$35 million Federal Government contribution: \$45 million

External funding requirement: \$25 million to \$30 million

Status: Masterplan endorsed. Feasibility study in development

Nunawading Indoor Sports Centre government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Glen Waverley District

Federal

- Chisholm
- Deakin (close to border)

Images above: Artistic impressions only, subject to community engagement and Council approval.



Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor sport facilities in Whitehorse are at or over capacity. Demand will increase as our population grows.

There are not enough sports fields in Whitehorse to accommodate the number of people and teams who want to play outdoor sports.

In Whitehorse, there are more than 12,000 seasonal sport participants vying for the use of 53 seasonally allocated sports fields and 28 seasonally allocated sporting pavilions.

There has also been huge growth in female participation in sport, including soccer and Australian Rules Football. Allocation requests for other sports have also increased including rugby (+43%), Ultimate Frisbee (+50%) and hockey (+18%).

The use of our existing sports fields is impacted by factors including ground condition, grass type, irrigation and drainage, weather conditions, type of use and intensity of use. Open space is also significantly impacted by the North East Link (NEL) and Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) major transport projects.

Council seeks partnerships to increase outdoor sport capacity. We invite conversations from schools, other councils, the private sector and especially the state and federal governments on ways we can partner to increase capacity.



Ballyshannassy Reserve

Ballyshannassy Reserve contains three soccer pitches in the winter and two cricket ovals in summer. The pavilion was built in the late 1970s and provides a basic level of amenity that has historically limited club operations. It has no social space, limited kitchen facilities and two small changing rooms. In the past 24 months, soccer participation has increased by more than 50% (from 105 to 160) with 860+ new players taking up the sport in Whitehorse. A modern pavilion will support Council and the State Government's investment in new sports field lighting, which will expand use of the site into the evenings.

Ballyshannassy Reserve funding opportunities

Council maximum funding contribution: \$2.9 million

External funding requirement: \$8 million
Total project cost: \$10.9 million

(indicative only)

Ballyshannassy Reserve government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Ashwood District

Federal

Chisholm



Bennettswood Reserve

Bennettswood Reserve contains one fenced and floodlit oval used for cricket and football and one unfenced oval in poor condition that lacks drainage, irrigation and lighting. The site also includes a pavilion and cricket practice nets. The area has three land owners: Council, Deakin University and Crown land. In collaboration with Deakin University, there is an opportunity to enable the north oval to be utilised as an additional sports field for soccer and cricket, to provide covered multi-purpose outdoor courts and to improve open space in the precinct. These upgrades would meet the needs of the growing community resulting from the SRL precinct plans and housing targets.

Bennettswood Reserve funding opportunities

Council maximum funding contribution: \$2 million

External funding requirement: \$9 million Total project cost: \$11 million

(total cost is not all Council's project)

Status: Masterplan in progress

Bennettswood Reserve government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
 - » Southern Metropolitan Region (close to border)
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Box Hill District
 - » Ashwood District (close to border)

Federal

Chisholm



Surrey Park South West

Surrey Park South West Pavilion is an important part of a busy precinct that is well-used by the community for sports, dog walking, running and socialising. The Pavilion was constructed in 1977 and is no longer fit for purpose. The building lacks storage and limits the resident clubs' operations. Its two change rooms do not cater for multiple games at the site. A pavilion upgrade at Surrey Park is important to support growing participation levels in football, cricket, dog obedience clubs and other activities.

Surrey Park South West funding opportunities

Council maximum funding contribution: \$6.6 million

External funding requirement: \$6 million
Total project cost: \$12.6 million
(indicative only)

Surrey Park South West government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Box Hill District

Federal

Menzies



Davy Lane Reserve

The Davy Lane site is located in Forest Hill, on part of the former Healesville Freeway Reserve. There is currently one sports field that has been used for community sport since 1975. The quality of the turf for organised sport and other activities is not at a high standard (there is no irrigation or drainage) and there are no supporting amenities such as change rooms, public toilets, lighting or formalised car parking. Following community consultation the following is being proprosed: two natural turf floodlit sporting fields, a pavilion to support competition and training, a sealed car park and pathways through the reserve.

Davy Lane Reserve funding opportunities

Council's maximum funding contribution: \$11 million

External funding requirement: \$10 million

Total project cost: \$21 million Status: Masterplan in progress

Davy Lane Reserve government area

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Glen Waverley District

Federal

Deakin



Mahoney's Reserve

Mahoney's Reserve is 9.8 hectares of open space. It offers a variety of sporting and recreational opportunities such as soccer, cricket, badminton, table tennis, walking, dog off-lead area and play. These groups are currently serviced by three separate buildings. This project will consolidate the the northern and southern pavilions to better meet the needs of sporting groups and scouts. The masterplan will also consider upgrading the playground, providing dog-related infrastructure, paths, and recreational park facilities.

Mahoney's Reserve funding opportunities

Council's maximum funding contribution: \$6.4 million

External funding requirement: \$8.2 million Total project: \$14.6 million

(indicative only)

Mahoney's Reserve goverment areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Glen Waverley District

Federal

Deakin



Charles Rooks Reserve

Charles Rooks Reserve in Nunawading is a popular park for passive recreation, providing open space for nearby residents, walkers and children using the playground. There is an opportunity to renew the playspace to create a diverse range of play opportunities for all age groups including covered picnic facilities, barbecues, tables and benches. A half court and outdoor exercise equipment would cater to all ages. This project would include restoring the natural landscape at the neighbouring Dagola Reserve, adding interpretive signage and seating along the path that meanders through the remnant bushland reserve to provide opportunities to appreciate and learn about nature and indigenous vegetation.

Charles Rooks Reserve funding opportunities

Council's maximum funding contribution: \$486,000

External funding requirement: \$544,000

Total project cost: \$1.03 million

(indicative only)

Charles Rooks Reserve government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Ringwood District

Federal

Deakin

Hagenauer Reserve and Bill Sewart Athletics Tracks

Hagenauer Reserve Athletics Track in Box Hill and Bill Sewart Athletics Track in Burwood East both need resurfacing in the short term, with the necessary background work underway.

Hagenauer Reserve Athletics Track funding opportunities

External funding requirement: \$1.6 million+ (pending condition audit and design)

Total project estimate: \$1.6 million+ (pending condition audit and design)

Hagenauer Reserve Athletics Track government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Box Hill District

Federal

Menzies

Bill Sewart Athletics Track funding opportunities

External funding requirement: \$1.8

million+ (pending condition audit and design)

Total project estimate: \$1.8 million+ (pending condition audit and design)

Bill Sewart Athletics Track government areas

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Glen Waverley

Federal

Chisholm



Walker Park Gymnastics

The new gymnastics centre will replace the current indoor sports complex, which is now reaching the end of its functional life. The gymnastics centre will provide fit-for-purpose facilities for the Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club and will also create new opportunities for the community and other groups to utilise the gymnastics centre.

Walker Park Gymnastics funding opportunities

Council's maximum funding contribution: \$9 million

External funding requirement: \$1 million+

(pending scoping and designs)

Total project cost: \$10 million+

(pending scoping and designs)

Walker Park Gymnastics government area

State

- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Ringwood District

Federal

Deakin

Indoor Sports Facilities

Council's Indoor Sports Plan (in development) analyses the demand for indoor sports. It sets a strategic direction to address the requirements of indoor sports and facilities across the municipality.

Our population is forecast to increase by about 25% to 234,277 people by 2046 (excluding Suburban Rail Loop and Activity Centre population forecasts), which is likely to mean an additional 4000 people seeking local facilities to play indoor sport.

Schools have also identified that additional public (and school) indoor sport courts are needed to serve schools.

There is inadequate capacity in existing facilities to allow any sports to grow at peak times or to accommodate additional indoor sports. Most indoor sports facilities have constraints in meeting current sporting requirements, largely due to the age of assets and changing sporting codes. Court size and roof height is a major issue in most of the older facilities, especially schools.

Sports, such as netball, are constrained mostly by facility design issues, whereas growth in table tennis and gymnastics is constrained by a lack of dedicated facilities.

Aqualink Nunawading

Aqualink Nunawading is a much-loved and well used facility that caters for:

- recreation and leisure
- training, fitness and competition users including Nunawading Swimming Club
- education, including learn-to-swim and schools
- health and wellness users including group fitness classes, gym and rehabilitation programs

The 2021 Aqualink Feasibility Study concluded that Aqualink Nunawading is at end of life and will require a significant financial investment to continue operating into the future to cater for current users and provide services for more of the community.



Aqualink funding opportunities

Council's maximum funding contribution: \$80 million

External funding requirement: \$20 million

Status: Business case in development

Aqualink Nunawading government areas

State

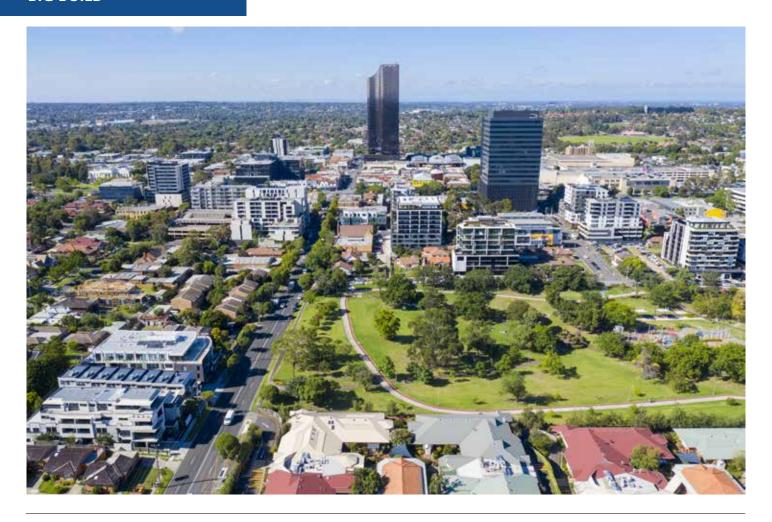
- Legislative Council (Upper House)
 - » North Eastern Metropolitan Region
- Legislative Assembly (Lower House)
 - » Glen Waverley District
 - » Ringwood District (close to border)

Federal

Deakin

Aqualink Nunawading community groups

- Swimming clubs
- Learn-to-swim providers
- Club associations
- Group fitness and gym users
- Special needs users
- Wellness and seniors' rehabilitation programs



Suburban Rail Loop

The Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) has the potential to change how we move around metropolitan Melbourne and influence where we work, learn and live. Whitehorse City Council looks forward to the improved transport options that this project will bring. While being generally supportive of the project, Whitehorse City Council wishes to work with the State Government on four issues:

- Create a genuinely integrated transport hub in Box Hill, where existing transport infrastructure is improved and connected with new SRL infrastructure.
- 2. Avoid and minimise the social, amenity and environmental impacts on the Whitehorse community, particularly those close to the new Box Hill and Burwood construction sites.
- 3. Maximise the look, feel and useability of the SRL infrastructure and the areas surrounding the stations.
- 4. Partner with Council to develop the Precinct Plans for the areas around each station in a truly collaborative effort.

Council calls upon the State Government to include the following elements:

- Redevelop the dysfunctional and unsafe bus interchange that is currently above the Box Hill Central shopping centre.
- Protect residents and businesses from noise, vibration, poor air quality, loss of amenity and open space impacts of the project.
- Retain heritage buildings and structures.
- Minimise the space and time impacts of construction works on Box Hill Gardens.
- Return Sinnott Street Reserve in Burwood to Council after construction is complete.
- Ensure the SRL east-west cycling path within the Whitehorse Road median connects to the Box Hill to Hawthorn Strategic Cycling Corridor, via Nelson Road, Hopetoun Parade and Thurston Street.
- Continue the proposed naturalisation of Gardiners Creek through to Highbury Road, Burwood.

- Design the project to ensure that tree retention is maximised to the greatest extent.
- Plan and deliver infrastructure within the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre (MAC) in accordance with the vision contained in the draft Box Hill Structure Plan and Urban Design Framework.
- Plan and deliver infrastructure beyond the Box Hill MAC and near the Burwood station that complements the Whitehorse Housing

- Strategy, Neighbourhood Character Study and Residential Corridors Built Form Study.
- Ensure the State Government funds and delivers services, infrastructure and amenity enhancements in Burwood and Box Hill to address the growing population resulting from the SRL Precinct Plans, particularly providing new quality open space in appropriate locations.

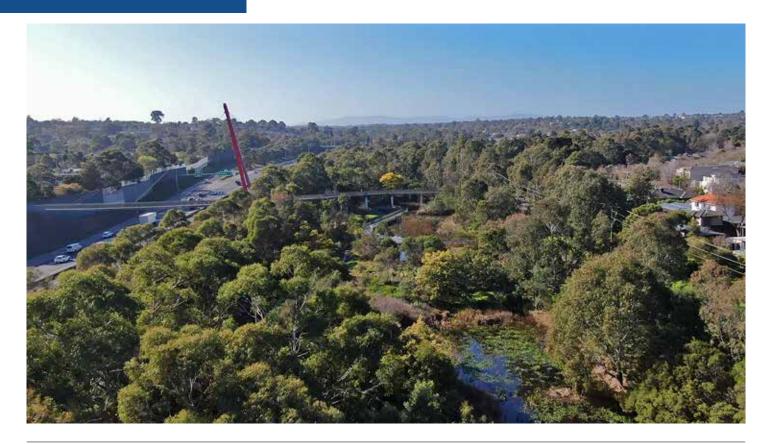


Open Space

There are existing demands and pressures on the open space network within the Whitehorse municipality. The growing population predicted by the State Government will exacerbate this. Council is aware of community interest in the Brickworks site in the Box Hill Precinct, as is the State Government.

This land is in private ownership. Council will explore all opportunities to secure and maintain open space in Whitehorse and in particular in Box Hill, where the population is expected to significantly increase in light of State Government projects and policy.

Council will continue its advocacy relating to open space opportunities, particularly noting the proposed population forecasts for Whitehorse identified as part of the State Government's housing targets with 79,000 homes to be built within the City by 2051. Council is seeking a collaborative approach that enables the Government and Council to address an immediate shortfall of open space associated with the Suburban Rail Loop and North East Link major projects. The Box Hill and Burwood areas are a particular focus.



North East Link

North East Link (NEL) is having significant impacts on those who live, work, study or visit Whitehorse. Council wants to work with the State Government to ensure the project meets transport objectives while respecting the local needs of the community.

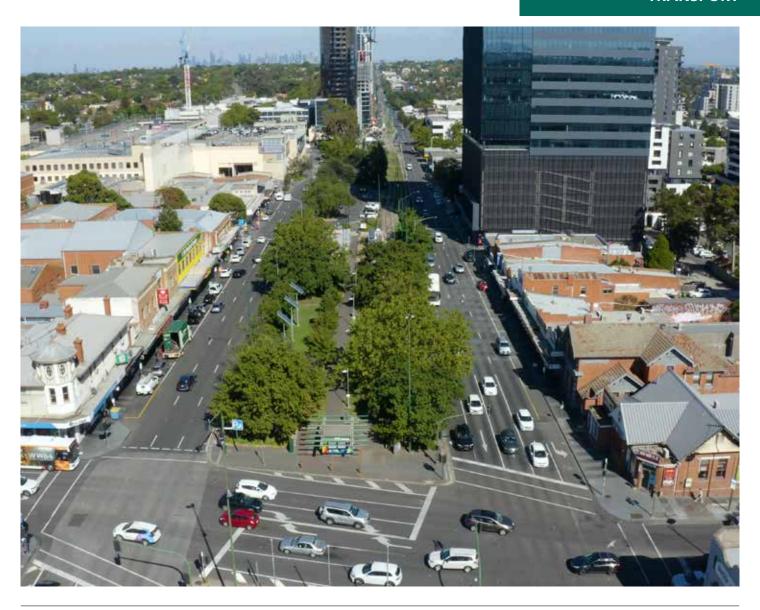
Council calls for the NEL to continue to adapt designs to incorporate a smaller footprint for the Eastern Freeway. This has a range of benefits for the Whitehorse community including:

- minimising the environmental impact on Koonung Creek
- retaining mature vegetation
- better amenity for adjacent residents by not installing noise walls close to their back fences
- reduced visual, noise and air amenity impacts to residents and users of adjacent sporting and open space facilities

To improve community outcomes in Whitehorse, Council also calls on the State Government to:

 address the congestion and deteriorated function the NEL is predicted to cause on arterial and local roads, particularly (but not limited to) Elgar Road, Station Street, Middleborough Road, Surrey/Blackburn Road

- design the project to ensure that tree retention is maximised and noise and air quality impacts are minimised to the greatest extent
- improve degraded sections of Koonung
 Creek to enhance the ecological, habitat and aesthetic value
- upgrade the Koonung Creek Trail including:
 - » make walking and cycling more comfortable by resurfacing the path and installing additional lighting, toilets, drinking fountains, seating and shelter
 - » improve wayfinding and signage along the entire trail
 - » upgrade the existing underpasses to ensure they are aesthetically pleasing and safe for users to want to enter
 - » grade separate the trail on the south side of the Eastern Freeway at Middleborough Road, Surrey Road and Springvale Road
 - » improve the trail's connectivity on the east side of Middleborough Road
 - » develop a walking and cycling link from the trail to Bushy Creek
- provide new open space and enhance existing spaces to compensate for the loss of useable space



Transport Advocacy

These transport advocacy items reflect what Council has heard as being important to the Whitehorse community and will help ensure enhanced liveability and services into the future.

Roads

The poor condition of the road surface of several state-maintained arterial roads within the City of Whitehorse has been repeatedly raised by the community.

This includes but is not limited to:

- 1–3 Mahoneys Road, Forest Hill
- 226–230 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading
- 14–16 Blackburn Road, Blackburn

Cycling

Council advocates to the Department of Transport and Planning to commit \$10 million for detailed design for the entire length of the Box Hill to Hawthorn Strategic Cycling Corridor Trail, and to deliver the project.

Complementing this project would be the contruction of a Nelson Road overpass to have north-south connection over the train line to the Box Hill to Hawthorn Strategic Cycling Corridor.

Public transport

To support more people to comfortably use public transport, Council advocates to the State Government to:

- fully upgrade the Box Hill Bus Interchange
- fund a redeveloped Laburnum Train Station car park
- improve accessibility for route 75 tram stops



Planning

Planning reform

In recent years, the State Government has implemented a series of changes to the planning system in Victoria. These changes have been made without involving local councils or the community. These changes are noteworthy because they strip away the following elements:

- Council's role as the Responsible Authority
- planning permit requirements
- 'deemed to comply' standards
- public consultation
- consultation with local government
- third-party appeal rights of residents

Council is concerned the Government's multiple layers of reform and new planning controls will collectively reduce the liveability and character of Whitehorse neighbourhoods. The participation of the community is vital to establish a transparent planning system that enhances the amenity of local neighbourhoods. Consequently, extensive community consultation must form an integral part of significant planning decisions.

Windfall gains tax

Since its introduction in July 2023, the windfall gains tax (WGT) has prevented councils from implementing strategic asset management practices. WGT is aimed at taxing the increased value of land resulting from rezoning decisions. The tax is intended to support

the funding of public infrastructure; however the revenue raised from WGT is to be deposited into the State Government's consolidated revenue.

Unlike Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution revenue, there is no 'WGT-specific fund' with no certainty of expenditure on public infrastructure. As the legislation currently stands, councils are treated unfavourably compared to private landowners and universities, which raises concerns of equity, efficiency and fairness to an organisation that aims to improve our local communities. Whitehorse City Council joined the cities of Boroondara, Knox, Banyule and Manningham to call for local governments to be exempt from WGT, and later resolved to advocate for an exemption or for the funds to go back to the areas they came from.

Council is committed to advocating to the State Government to:

- exempt councils from the provisions of WGT, or to allow funds collected by the tax to be redistributed back to the relevant local government area
- retain Significant Landscape Overlays and review and adjust the 'deemed to comply' standards
- release details of rates and new taxes or charges that are going to be applied to all properties within the SRL planning zones



Funding Opportunities: \$100,000 to \$200,000

Hunter Knoll BLACKBURN SOUTH

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$125,000

Walker Park Play Space NUNAWADING

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$130,000

Murray Drive Reserve BURWOOD

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$135,000

Licola Reserve
VERMONT SOUTH

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$135,000



Funding Opportunities: \$200,000 to \$300,000

Box Hill to Ringwood Shared Path near Laburnum Station

Path upgrade

Funding opportunity: up to \$250,000

Schwerkolt Cottage Play Space MITCHAM

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$280,000

Elmhurst Basin BLACKBURN

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$207,000







Funding Opportunities: \$300,000+

Tyrol Park Multi-sports Court

VERMONT SOUTH

Install multi-sports half court

Funding opportunity: up to \$600,000

East Burwood Reserve BURWOOD EAST

Multipurpose netball cricket training net

Funding opportunity: up to \$600,000

East Burwood Reserve

BURWOOD EAST

Play and community space (north of Velodrome)

Funding opportunity: up to \$1.55 million

Surrey Dive

BOX HILL

Play space renewal

Funding opportunity: up to \$1.55 million

East Burwood Reserve

BURWOOD EAST

DDA access and spectator area

Funding opportunity: up to \$1.45 million

Pipe Track Shared Path

FOREST HILL

Connect the sections of the shared user path near the intersection of Springvale Road/Canterbury Road

Funding opportunity: up to \$1 million

East Burwood Reserve BURWOOD EAST

Active recreation precinct (pump track, multipurpose court, incidental skating, path and landscape)

Funding opportunity: up to \$1.85 million

Healesville Freeway Reserve FOREST HILL

Provide a walking and cycling connection across Springvale Road to connect the Healesville Freeway Reserve to the Pipe Track

Funding opportunity: up to \$3 million

Terrara Park

VERMONT SOUTH

Social recreation, fitness equipment and play space

Funding opportunity: up to \$407,000

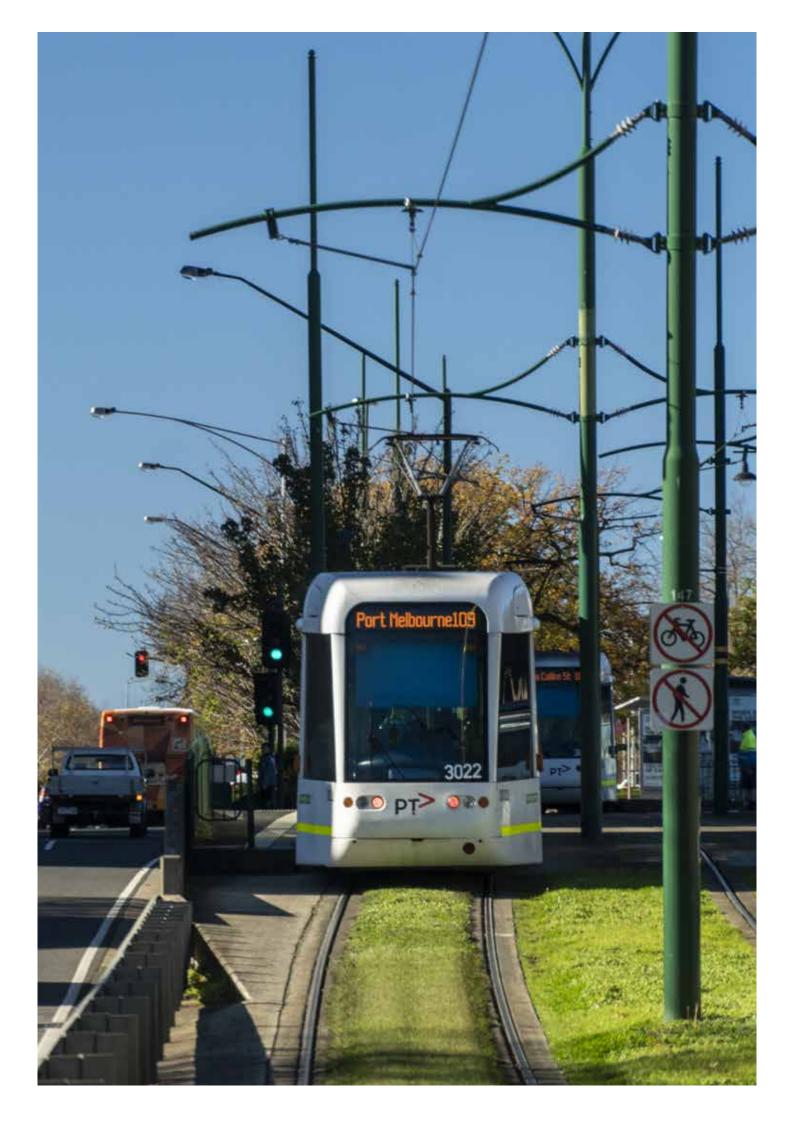
Schwerkolt Cottage

MITCHAM

Play and community space

Funding opportunity: up to \$397,000







ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

CONTACTING COUNCIL

Postal address: Whitehorse City Council

Locked Bag 2

Nunawading Delivery Centre 3131

ABN: 39 549 568 822

Telephone: 9262 6333 (including language support)

NRS: 133 677 then quote 9262 6333

(Service for deaf or hearing impaired people)

Service Centre: Whitehorse Civic Centre

379–399 Whitehorse Road

Nunawading 3131

Website:www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/contact-usEmail:customer.service@whitehorse.vic.gov.auSocial media:Connect with Whitehorse City Council





