

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday 18 March, 2025
6:30 PM**

**Council Chamber
Level 1
Footscray Town Hall
61 Napier St, Footscray**

MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Pradeep Tiwari (Chair)
Councillor Cuc Lam
Councillor Samantha Meredith
Councillor Mohamed Semra
Councillor Bernadette Thomas
Councillor Elena Pereyra
Councillor Susan Yengi

To be confirmed at the Council Meeting
15 April, 2025

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Commencement of Meeting and Welcome	4
2. Apologies	4
3. Leave of Absence	4
4. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest	4
5. Public Question Time	5
6. Confirmation of Minutes	13
6.1. Confirmation of Minutes - 18 February 2025	13
7. Reports from Committees	13
8. Petitions	13
8.1. Petition - Food Program at Nicholson Street Mall	13
9. Officer Reports	14
9.1. Sarah Carter Memorial Recognition	14
9.2. Response to Notice of Motion 2024/03 Activity Centre Amenity	15
9.3. Annual Community Survey 2024	15
9.4. Municipal Association of Victoria - May 2025 State Council	16
9.5. Australian Local Government Association - 2025 National General Assembly 16	
9.6. Heritage Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference Review	16
9.7. Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre Energy Upgrade Funding	17
9.8. Amendment to 2025 City Development Delegated Committee Meeting Schedule	18
9.9. Council Support and Expenses Report November 2024 to December 2024 ..	18
9.10. Governance Report - January 2025 and February 2025	18
10. Notices of Motion	19
10.1. Notice Of Motion 2025/02: Enhancing Community Safety and Well-Being in Maribyrnong	19
11. Councillor Question Time	20
12. Urgent Business	22
13. Confidential Business	22
14. Meeting Closure	22

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME

The meeting commenced at 6.31pm.

The Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari made the following acknowledgement:

“Maribyrnong City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung Bunurong Peoples of the Kulin Nation and pays its respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging”.

PRESENT

Councillor Pradeep Tiwari (Chair)
Councillor Cuc Lam
Councillor Samantha Meredith
Councillor Mohamed Semra
Councillor Bernadette Thomas
Councillor Elena Pereyra
Councillor Susan Yengi

IN ATTNDANCE

Chief Executive Officer, Celia Haddock
Director Community Services, Lucas Gosling
Director Planning and Environment, Mike McIntosh
Director Infrastructure Services, Patrick Jess
Director Corporate Services, Lisa King
Manager Governance and Commercial Services, Phil McQue
Governance Officer, Jessica Abela
Manager Customer Engagement, Lauren McKenzie

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Public Question Time commenced at 6.32pm and 19 questions were received.

Tim Candler asked the following questions:

1. In June 2023, the late Mayor Sarah Carter announced that five high traffic roads across the municipality would receive a face lift with Summerhill Road resurfacing scheduled to start in September 2023. Despite Maribyrnong City Council including funding for improvements to Summerhill Road in the 2022, 2023 and 2024 annual budgets, the overdue resurfacing of Summerhill Road is yet to commence. Now that the Lions development is nearing completion will council please put rate paying residents first and fix this horrific road?
2. As per my previous question at the 10 September 2024 Council meeting in relation to the resurfacing of Summerhill Road. Given that over six months have now elapsed has Council found suitable contractor to undertake the work, and if so who is the contractor and when will the resurfacing of Summerhill Road commence and be completed?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised the timing of the rehabilitation of Summerhill Road between Essex Street and Ballarat Road has unfortunately been impacted by the Lions Club development, with trucks and cranes requiring access to the site sometimes seven days a week.

Targeted concrete kerb and channel repairs and road pavement patching occurred between Eden Street and Ballarat Road during the second half of 2024.

The procurement of the next stage of works is current progression, involving reconstruction of the road between Essex Street and Eden Street, a new pedestrian crossing near the new development and asphalt resurfacing between Eden Street and Ballarat Road, including consideration of the completion of the Lions Club development and construction methodology, to minimise impacts on both local residents and the general community.

It should be noted that a significant impact on road users will occur during this phase of the works including removal of on-street parking for periods of time, management of traffic along the route and maintaining property access.

Council will continue to monitor and maintain the surface of the road in line with its Road Management Plan and Council will also be communicating with the public and residents early on when that happens.

It is anticipated construction could commence July 2025 weather dependant.

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

3. Johnson Reserve is arguably the busiest park in West Footscray with fantastic barbecue and playground facilities and open space which is evidenced by its popularity with young families. Despite it being such a popular and well utilised space, Johnson Reserve lacks basic public facilities, especially a public toilet. Will the Council please install a public toilet similar to the one recently built across the tracks in the much smaller Harris Reserve in Seddon? There are no public toilet facilities.

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council is currently undertaking designs for a new pavilion at Johnson Reserve which includes provision of public toilets as well as change rooms and social facilities. The timeline for construction is subject to the future capital works program and approval through Council's budget process.

Fletcher Bubb asked the following questions:

1. The Maribyrnong Council Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) was originally developed in 2012 (now 13 years old). A discussion paper for the ITS 2025 refresh was presented at the 23 July 2024 Council Meeting, marking the beginning of the strategy's renewal. The paper outlined the Council's goal to finalise the refreshed strategy by mid-2025, following community consultations. Given that it is now March 2025, when can the community expect an invitation from the Council to participate in consultations and provide feedback on the ITS refresh?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that in the first half of 2024 Council undertook community consultation in regard to the Integrated Transport Strategy and Council has now progressed with drafting a new Integrated Transport Strategy.

The second stage of community engagement on the draft Strategy is scheduled to occur over April and May 2025 and dependant on the outcomes of this engagement, it is expected that Council will be presented with a final draft for consideration in June or July 2025.

2. Can the Council provide an update on the Maribyrnong Public Toilet Plan 2019–2029, including which facilities have been completed and what is the planned schedule for the remaining installations?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised the following toilets have been delivered, are in progress or are part of future open space improvement considerations.

The following projects have been delivered:

- Hansen Reserve West Footscray
- Cruickshank Park Yarraville
- Harris Reserve Seddon

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

The following projects are in progress:

- *Footscray Wharf under construction with completion due in August 2025*
- *Yarraville Gardens under construction with completion due in May / June 2025*
- *Cranwell Reserve Braybrook with completion due in December 2025*

The following have been listed part of Future Open Space projects:

- *Quarry Park Footscray*
- *Johnson Reserve West Footscray*
- *Dobson Reserve Maidstone*
- *Robert Barrett Reserve Maribyrnong*

With the strategy now at its half way point, Council will be conducting a review of the Public Toilet Plan to ensure the planned locations meet the needs of the community. Community engagement will be undertaken in April 2025, where the community will be encouraged to provide their views on the new locations.

3. In the interest of financial transparency and meeting ratepayers' expectations, can you please provide details supporting your response at the last Council meeting regarding the recent announcement of the Creative West project, specifically, how was the \$100 million construction cost estimated? Please include details on who conducted the cost estimates, when they were performed, and any publicly available references related to the project, as would typically be expected for public works of this scale.

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that Creative West, formally known as NeXT has been a project that Council has advocated for since 2016. This project seeks to deliver an inclusive place that welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds and invites residents, visitors and tourists to enjoy. It will be a major facility that has a library, performing arts and arts and cultural facilities.

Through community consultation, the concept has been designed to respond to the community needs and in 2020, Council resolved to match up to \$5 million in funding, contingent on State or Commonwealth support.

In February 2025, the Federal Minister Catherine King announced Council's successful grant application through the Urban Planning Precincts grant stream.

The estimate of probable cost for the project was prepared by SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd.

Council is currently only committed to the design phase of Creative West, not yet to construction. The final cost will be refined over the next two years as the detailed design progresses. Large projects like this require extensive planning, community consultation and investments from several levels of government, not just Council.

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Kau Por Chris Hui asked the following question:

1. We have a recurring issue with trucks crashing into the wall at the Leeds St entrance to Footscray Market, especially around midnight on Sundays when deliveries occur. Although there is CCTV installed at the entrance to Footscray Market facing Leeds St, it is too far to capture the trucks entering Leeds St. There used to be a pole at the Leeds St entrance that was effective in preventing this, but it is no longer there. Could you please advise why the pole was removed?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised at the time of responding to this question that Council is unable to confirm why the pole may have been removed.

However, Officers would welcome a discussion with the questioner to follow up with a response and will make contact in the coming days.

Madeleine Serle asked the following questions:

1. Why did Maribyrnong Council allow five shipping containers to sit in the Anglers carpark risking public safety for eight months without requiring a planning permit?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council commenced planning enforcement regarding the placement of shipping containers without a planning permit immediately upon being notified by members of the community.

It is standard practice for planning enforcement activities to pause while the planning permit process is underway. This is Council's preferred method for resolving non-compliance with the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme, seeking compliance rather than pursuing punitive action.

2. When will Maribyrnong Council provide an itemised breakdown of all grant monies for flood recovery?

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that Maribyrnong Council currently has two recovery grant programs, the Community Recovery Hubs program and the Community Recovery Officer program, jointly funded by the Victorian and Australian governments. The last expenditure report was in July 2024.

The Community Recovery Hubs Grant program has been extended until 31 December 2025.

An updated expenditure summary will be provided in April 2025, aligning with Council's reporting requirements to Emergency Recovery Victoria.

These grant scope is for community connection initiatives, education, capacity building, staffing and recovery support outreach. Programs are guided by the Community Recovery Committee and the broad Maribyrnong community through the Maribyrnong Community Strengths and Opportunities workshop.

Project suggestions or feedback are welcome to ensure the program is meeting community needs.

3. Council imposes specific flood designs for new homes on LSIO (Land Subject to Inundation Overlay) that raise building costs by hundreds of thousands of dollars. Melbourne water may impose a condition in a Maribyrnong Council planning permit that gives Melbourne water a complete indemnity meaning the resident waives all rights for flood damage and contents. This condition is under s173 and stays on the title. This conditions means the property cannot get flood insurance and without this insurance cannot get mortgage financing. How many properties in Maribyrnong have this condition on title?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council is not aware of any titles that have such a restriction. Melbourne Water requested such an agreement for one planning permit application prior to the October 2022 floods, however this was subsequently removed at the request of the property owner.

Brian Sanderson asked the following question:

1. Referring to the recently removed playground in Nicholson Street, for which the reason given by the Mayor was due to anti-social behaviour. The playground was well used by children in its early days, but was allowed to fall into a terrible state due to social issues in Footscray. Is it now Council policy to simply remove all entertainment in Footscray, rather than actually addressing and advocating to the State to address said social issues?

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that this is not a policy of Council and advised that Council have never advertised this as such. In regard to the playground we had three months of community consultation before the removal. The social issues impacting the Footscray CBD are many and complex.

Council continues to explore a range of initiatives including events and activities to activate this area, supporting local traders, increasing local laws presence in the area, and increased cleaning and graffiti removal.

In addition, Council continues to work with a range of other stakeholders including the state government, advocating for support and assistance to address these social issues.

With the consent of Councillors, the Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari extended Public Question Time by 15 minutes at 6:47pm.

2. The recent announcement by the Commonwealth of \$5M in funding for Creative West comes with a requirement for Council to also tip in \$5M. When will Council release the business case to justify this enormous expenditure in a cost of living crisis?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised the investment case for Creative West is not a public document at this time, but was used as a part of the funding submission to the Commonwealth Urban Precincts Program. Council resolved in 2020 to support the detailed design process for what was then called the NEXT project with a \$5m co-contribution, provided that there was matching funding from the State or Commonwealth. As detailed at the last meeting, this will be expended over multiple budget years and will be a part of Council's annual capital expenditure program.

3. Has Council costed the ongoing operating cost of Creative West upon completion?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised the full operational cost has not yet been determined, as it will depend on the outcome of the detailed design and any decisions on the management and operating model. With an expanded level of services aimed at supporting the needs for open space and community services for current and future Footscray residents as our population increases, there will be a need for additional operating expenses. More library staff will be needed, but the operating model of the performance space has yet to be finalised. The design process will occur over the next two years, with construction dependant on capital support from both the State and the Commonwealth.

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Ken Betts submitted three public questions with the second question being in the form of a statement. Whilst Council's Governance Rules allow for the provision of public questions, it does not provide for statements to be made. The Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari thanked Mr Betts for the statement, however advised the statement would not be read out at the meeting.

1. Will Council care about its City and clean up the Nicholson St Mall and ensure that it is regularly maintained?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that Council's cleansing unit undertakes a daily pressure wash of Nicholson Street Mall where we have increased the cleansing and in addition cleanse Chambers Lane and Byron Plaza, Monday to Friday. Illegal graffiti is identified by Council's Cleansing Unit during their daily rubbish removal tasks. Offensive graffiti is removed within 24 hours by Council.

3. Does Council have an Easter activity promotion program for families?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that Council has an extensive program of events, festivals and activations throughout the year across the municipality. This Easter, Council has the following events occurring at its libraries.

- *Wednesday 2 April, Easter themed Story time with craft at Footscray Library*
- *Monday 14 April, Easter themed Baby Rhyme Time at Footscray Library*
- *The week prior to Easter, all libraries will have an Easter themed lego template for children*
- *An Easter Book display will occur at all libraries.*

Community organisations are also welcome to apply via Council's grants program for specific Easter events in 2026.

Jennifer Chemay asked the following questions:

1. On Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024, I submitted a request, along with supporting documentation regarding the persistent parking congestion caused by Anglers Tavern customers in our residential area. To ascertain the progress made on this specific matter, I respectfully ask the council: Could you please provide a comprehensive, step-by-step timeline outlining the actions taken by the council, and specifically by the Transport Engineering Department, since the submission of my request on that date?

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council has received correspondence from residents who reside in Clyde Street and Leopold Street, Maribyrnong, regarding increased on-street parking demand due to non-local vehicles parking for extended periods.

To investigate these concerns, Council's Engineering and Transport Department has met with six concerned residents and conducted on-site parking occupancy observations four times on different days and at various hours to better understand the concerns.

A draft proposal has now been developed to address this issue, and will be shared with residents in the coming weeks to ascertain broad support before implementation. The proposed parking restriction changes will aim to ensure sufficient parking availability for residents and their visitors whilst maintaining adequate parking turnover.

2. I have submitted a petition regarding the Anglers Tavern's planning permit for the retention of five shipping containers in a flood-prone residential area. Could the Council please provide a clear timeline for the Councillors' review of this petition, Council's review of the associated objections and Council's assessment of all relevant planning considerations, particularly the risks of land inundation?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed the petition received will be tabled and considered at the next Council Meeting and a response provided accordingly. The petition will be considered as part of Council Officer's assessment of the current planning permit application process.

Christopher Xuereb asked the following questions:

1. What is the estimated timeframe to finalise a plan to revitalise the Footscray Central Business District?
2. Is there any reason why consultation with the community regarding the revitalisation of the Footscray Central Business District cannot begin immediately via platforms such as Your City Your Voice or letterbox drop offs?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised Footscray Structure Plan and Public Realm Plan are under review this year with a range of short term actions to be implemented including the upgrade to Maddern Square. The timing of formal consultation is typically informed by the level of details and information available to actually consult on. That said, we are always open to and welcome community ideas and suggestions to revitalise the Footscray Central Business District.

The Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari declared Public Question Time closed at 6.55pm

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1. Confirmation of Minutes - 18 February 2025

To present the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18 February 2025 for confirmation.

Council Resolution

That Council confirms the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18 February 2025.

Moved: Cr Cuc Lam
Seconded: Cr Samantha Meredith

CARRIED

7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Nil.

8. PETITIONS

8.1. Petition - Food Program at Nicholson Street Mall

The purpose of this report is to table a Petition received in relation to the Monday Evening Food Program operating at Nicholson Street Mall.

Council Resolution

That Council:

1. *Receives and notes the Petition - Food Program at Nicholson Street Mall; and*
2. *Requests the Chief Executive Officer to consider the Petition and determine the appropriate response.*

Moved: Cr Mohamed Semra
Seconded: Cr Susan Yengi

CARRIED

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

9. OFFICER REPORTS

9.1. Sarah Carter Memorial Recognition

To seek Council's endorsement to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of former Mayor and Councillor, Cr Sarah Carter to the Maribyrnong City Council and community.

A motion was moved by Cr Bernadette Thomas, seconded by Cr Samantha Meredith, that Council suspend Standing Orders.

The Mayor, Cr Tiwari presented a Sarah Carter tribute book to Gaynor Morris, Sarah Carter's mother.

Council was then presented with former Sarah Carter's Mayoral Robes by Gaynor Morris.

The Mayor, fellow Councillors and Gaynor Morris spoke to this tribute.

A motion was moved by Cr Cuc Lam, seconded by Cr Elena Pereyra, that Council resume Standing Orders.

Council Resolution

That Council formally recognises the invaluable contribution of former Councillor Sarah Carter with Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 as below:

Part 1

Naming a 'contemplative seat' at Blacksmiths, Footscray Wharf in honour of former Councillor Sarah Carter;

Part 2

Creating a new 'Sarah Carter' Gender Equity category in the Maribyrnong Council Civic Awards, in honour of former Councillor Sarah Carter;

Part 3:

Displaying Sarah Carter's Mayoral Robes within the Maribyrnong Council Chamber, in honour of former Councillor Sarah Carter; and

Part 4:

Council requesting a further report on an appropriate naming proposal, in honour of former Councillor Sarah Carter.

Moved: Cr Susan Yengi
Seconded: Cr Cuc Lam

CARRIED

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Cr Lam left the meeting at 7:18 pm.

Cr Lam returned to the meeting at 7:20 pm.

9.2. Response to Notice of Motion 2024/03 Activity Centre Amenity

The purpose of this report is to respond to Notice of Motion 2024/03 regarding Activity Centre Amenity.

Council Resolution

That Council:

1. *Note that roller doors/shutters detract from the overall amenity of Maribyrnong Activity Centres;*
2. *Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to resume planning compliance and enforcement activities in respect of roller doors/shutters with the focus to be on education rather than punitive action; and*
3. *Note the delegation of the Manager City Development to consider requests to waive planning permit application fees.*

Moved: Cr Bernadette Thomas

Seconded: Cr Elena Pereyra

CARRIED

9.3. Annual Community Survey 2024

The purpose of this report is to provide the findings from the Maribyrnong City Council 2024 Annual Community Survey.

Council Resolution

That Council note the findings of the Maribyrnong City Council 2024 Annual Community Survey, shown at Attachment 1.

Moved: Cr Susan Yengi

Seconded: Cr Cuc Lam

CARRIED

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

9.4. Municipal Association of Victoria - May 2025 State Council

The purpose of this report is to consider motions for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meeting being held in May 2025.

Council Resolution

That Council approve the motions for submission to the May 2025 State Council of the Municipal Association of Victoria, as shown in Table 1 of this report.

Moved: Cr Elena Pereyra
Seconded: Cr Mohamed Semra

CARRIED

9.5. Australian Local Government Association - 2025 National General Assembly

The purpose of this report is to consider motions for submission to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) 2025 National General Assembly (NGA).

Council Resolution

That Council endorse the motions for submission to the 2025 Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, as shown in Table 1 of this report.

Moved: Cr Susan Yengi
Seconded: Cr Samantha Meredith

CARRIED

9.6. Heritage Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference Review

To present to Council the updated Terms of Reference for the Maribyrnong Heritage Advisory Committee and the process for appointing a new Heritage Advisory Committee.

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Council Resolution

That Council:

1. *Endorse the Maribyrnong Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, shown at Attachment 1, subject to the following amendments:*
 - a) *Section 2 – Objectives: Inclusion of an additional objective “to support the protection and management of First Nations sites of cultural and spiritual significance”*
 - b) *Section 4.1 – Membership: Inclusions of “Friends of Footscray Park” to the Committee membership composition of Professional Members*
2. *Note the proposed nomination process and that a further report will be presented to appoint members to the Maribyrnong Heritage Advisory Committee.*

Moved: Cr Bernadette Thomas

Seconded: Cr Mohamed Semra

CARRIED

9.7. Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre Energy Upgrade Funding

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Chief Executive Officer to execute a Commonwealth Government Community Energy Upgrade Grant Agreement to the value of \$2.5M, for the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre Electrification and Energy Efficiency Upgrade.

Council Resolution

That Council:

1. *Note it has been awarded \$2.5M funding under the Commonwealth Government Community Energy Upgrade Fund;*
2. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Commonwealth Government Grant Agreement, Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre Electrification and Energy Efficiency Upgrade; and*
3. *Note that project funding of approximately \$3.5M will be referred for consideration in the future budget deliberations for 2025/26 and 2026/27.*

Moved: Cr Susan Yengi

Seconded: Cr Mohamed Semra

CARRIED

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

9.8. Amendment to 2025 City Development Delegated Committee Meeting Schedule

The purpose of this report is to amend Council's adopted City Development Delegated Committee meeting schedule for the month of June 2025.

Council Resolution

That Council, in accordance with Clause 10 of the Governance Rules, note the June 2025 City Development Delegated Committee has been rescheduled to 6.30pm Wednesday 18 June 2025.

Moved: Cr Cuc Lam
Seconded: Cr Samantha Meredith

CARRIED

9.9. Council Support and Expenses Report November 2024 to December 2024

To present the Councillor Support and Expenses Report for the period 13 November 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Council Resolution

That Council notes the Councillor Support and Expenses Report for 13 November 2024 to 31 December 2024 period, to be made available via Council's website for the term of Council.

Moved: Cr Bernadette Thomas
Seconded: Cr Samantha Meredith

CARRIED

9.10. Governance Report - January 2025 and February 2025

Maribyrnong Council's Governance Report is a monthly standing report which provides a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance related matters.

Council Resolution

That Council note the January 2025 and February 2025 Governance Report.

Moved: Cr Susan Yengi
Seconded: Cr Cuc Lam

CARRIED

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

10.1. Notice Of Motion 2025/02: Enhancing Community Safety and Well-Being in Maribyrnong

Council Resolution

That Council:

1. *Acknowledges the community concern regarding the increase in antisocial behavior and perceptions of safety and amenity in Maribyrnong, particularly with respect to the Footscray CBD.*
2. *Reaffirms its commitment to fostering a safe, livable, and just community in line with Council's Social Justice Framework and Preventing Harm from Alcohol and other Drugs Policy.*
3. *Notes the complexity of the issues presenting and the diverse needs of people who experience homelessness, have mental health issues and are impacted by drugs of dependency.*
4. *Notes the work already undertaken to address these concerns including the Future Footscray Forum, the Creative Places project as well as support for community organisations and commercial festival producers to activate central Footscray with events that drive visitation and passive surveillance.*
5. *Acknowledges the collaborative work with Police, Housing and outreach / health agencies aimed at prioritizing public health and harm reduction*
6. *Supports residents across the municipality to build awareness and implement crime prevention strategies such as a neighborhood watch.*
7. *Requests that the CEO prepare a report outlining a potential Community Safety and Well-being Action Plan. The report should include the feasibility, costs, and funding opportunities for any proposed initiatives, to be presented at a future Council meeting.*

The plan can include but not be limited to:

 - a) *Opportunities for improving street lighting in high-risk areas across the municipality.*
 - b) *Exploring how Council can further support community-based solutions to drug and alcohol-related harm, particularly in the prevention and early intervention space.*
 - c) *Increasing CCTV coverage in key public spaces.*
 - d) *Increased street cleansing, graffiti control and waste management in areas of high foot traffic, including streets, laneways, and public spaces, to improve safety and amenity.*
 - e) *Strengthening community engagement initiatives that explore place-based models that address local safety concerns.*
8. *Requests that the Mayor formally write to the Premier, the Minister for Health, and the Minister for Mental Health and Well-being, advocating for increased investment in outreach, mental health and other support services in the City of Maribyrnong.*

Moved: Cr Mohamed Semra
Seconded: Cr Susan Yengi

CARRIED

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

11. COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

Councillor Question Time commenced at 7.53pm.

Cr Susan Yengi asked the following question:

Melbourne Water briefed Councillors last week on the proposed 'Flood Mitigation Study' that will be carried out by Jacobs and have advised that the study is expected to take approximately 18 months to carry out before any proposed options can be presented to the community.

Can you advise what actions/ and or measures Council is intending to implement in the interim to support our community with flood preparation and flood management?

The Chief Executive Officer advised that Maribyrnong Council, through the Community Recovery Committee (CRC), has identified preparedness as a key priority area and is implementing several initiatives. These include

- *Establishing the Maribyrnong Neighbourhood Flood Network, a network of trusted community leaders equipped with information on flood risk and preparedness, with training provided by VicSES and the Australian Red Cross.*
- *Scheduling a community planning day for the Maribyrnong community to participate in a facilitated discussion to develop a community-owned flood document.*
- *Additionally, a preparedness program will commence in April 2025, in partnership with VicSES and the Australian Red Cross.*
- *Working with Melbourne Water & VicSES to explore reinstating Property Flood Risk Charts in Maribyrnong.*
- *Developing a guide on insurance preparedness with input from insurance and recovery experts which will be launched in late March 2025.*
- *The Flood Recovery Program includes various social connection opportunities post-flood, aimed at building resilience.*

Council is also working with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, and through the VicSES, is updating the Maribyrnong Local Flood Guide based on community feedback. The VicSES are also updating the Municipal Flood and Storm Emergency Plan.

Councillors are working with Melbourne Water to provide advice during the planning phase of the Flood Mitigation Study consultation, to ensure community needs are considered.

These measures aim to provide a comprehensive and partnership based approach to enhancing flood preparedness and management within the community.

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

Cr Samantha Meredith asked the following questions:

Given the significant safety concerns on arterial roads within Maribyrnong Council such as Hopkins Street, Ballarat Road, Francis Street, Williamstown Road, and Whitehall Street. What advocacy has Council undertaken to advocate for safety improvements?

Has Council engaged with State Government and the Department of Transport to address these issues? What steps have been taken and what further actions does Council plan on taking to help support these roads to be safe and to have the necessary safety upgrades?

The Chief Executive Officer advised Maribyrnong's Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2030 outlines Council's approach to improving and managing road safety throughout the municipality with a vision to work towards zero fatalities and a decrease in all crash injuries within the City of Maribyrnong by 2030.

This includes continued advocacy to improve the safety and operation of arterial roads across the City. Over the years, Council has been actively advocating for safety improvements through regular meetings with the Department of Transport and Planning and direct communication with relevant State Ministers.

Council has seen some encouraging progress, however acknowledges that there is still much work to be done as the City experiences continued growth and change, and increased transport demand.

Recent positive outcomes have included implementation of:

- *Speed limit reductions along Moore Street, Whitehall Street and Hopkins Street in Footscray*
- *Area 40 (40km/h) has been introduced to the Joseph Road Precinct*
- *Speed limit reduction along Ballarat Rd from 70km/h to 60km/h, and we wish to see more reductions on Ballarat Road, particularly with the new hospital.*

Council is supporting various changes relating to the Westgate Tunnel Project, including Truck Bans for large freight vehicles on Somerville Road, Francis Street, Buckley Street and Moore Street, and safety improvements for cyclists.

Council is committed to continue advocating for the safety of road users as a priority, and will keep working in partnership with the State Government and VicPol to ensure these vital roads receive the attention and improvements they need.

Cr Mohamed Semra asked the following question:

As many in the community are aware the holy month of Ramadan is currently in progress. Can the Chief Executive Officer outline what initiatives are in place by Council to acknowledge this important month?

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council supports the recognition of Ramadan and Eid through a range of programs and events that we provide in partnership with the community. This year and each year is different and depends on our events program and which groups have applied for certain grants.

U N C O N F I R M E D M I N U T E S

On the 6 April, SalamFest will host Eid Festival at Kindred Studios. 'Eid is the biggest celebration in the Islamic calendar and enjoys a long standing artistic and culinary offerings of the Muslim cultures and heritage.'

The Maidstone Community Centre have partnered with Iceberg Foundation in Footscray to hold a small Eid dinner at the community centre for people within their local community at the request of the foundation. The Foundation has requested the event is for their community which we respect.

Youth Services are hosting a movie night this Friday and supporting an Iftar celebration event supporting the Sudanese youth group on Sunday evening. Council is supporting the African Business association with a sold out event on Friday, which we expect will attract close to 130 people. In addition to the support for these events, Council's library services curate a book display during Ramadan, which has received some very positive feedback. Council also recognises Ramadan and Eid with a number of social media posts and staff bulletins.

Cr Pradeep Tiwari asked the following question:

Is the Council aware that Steel Cement Pty Ltd has lodged a VCAT appeal (P143/2025) against its refusal of planning permit TP53/2023(1), with objections due to VCAT by 31 March 2025? What actions is Council taking in response?

The Chief Executive Officer advised Council are aware that an appeal has been lodged at VCAT, and Council will be making legal representation against this matter. Councillors will be kept informed through the Weekly Planning Report.

The Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari declared Public Question Time closed at 8.04pm

12. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

13. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Nil.

14. MEETING CLOSURE

The Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari, declared the meeting closed at 8.05pm.

To be confirmed at the Council Meeting
15 April, 2025.

Chair, Cr Pradeep Tiwari