

Advocacy Plan

2025-28





Acknowledgement of Country

Council is proud to represent a municipality with such an important Indigenous history and active community. Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land, the Kulin nation, and appreciates the rich culture and contributions Indigenous Australians have made and continue to make to this City.



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Why Invest in Maribyrnong

The City of Maribyrnong's population is projected to increase by 55 per cent to 153,000 by 2050. This rapid expansion presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

Maribyrnong's diverse and growing population, cultural diversity, mix of industry, and proximity to the Melbourne CBD make it an attractive place to live and invest. However, like many growing communities, our city faces complex social challenges, which require strategic investment from State and Federal Governments to address the pressure on local services, transport, infrastructure, and overall liveability.

The Advocacy Priorities outlined in this document address issues outlined in a number of strategic documents, including the *Council Plan 2025–2029*. They are based on community priorities, including public safety, housing, jobs, transport, mental health, sustainability, and cultural inclusion.

With effective advocacy and targeted government support, Maribyrnong can address all these issues and evolve into a sustainable, inclusive, and highly liveable city, which contributes meaningfully to Melbourne's broader growth and prosperity.

Our Advocacy Approach

Advocacy involves promoting our key priorities and concerns to government decision-makers and collaborating with aligned Councils, businesses, peak organisations, and other strategic partners to achieve meaningful results. These results can include securing funding, and influence decisions, policies and public opinion.

In principle, Maribyrnong City Council advocates to:

- Shape public policy and allocation of resources
- Increase visibility and understanding of issues impacting everyday lives
- Participate in matters impacting community – that is, listen.



Strategic Plans

In response to community requests for better economic conditions, transport options, mental health resources, sustainability efforts, and cultural improvements, Council has created strategic plans which set out our advocacy objectives and include: the *Council Plan 2025-2029*, the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029*, *Asset Plan 2025-2035*, *Financial Plan 2025-2035* and the *Maribyrnong 2040 Community Plan*.

These Council-endorsed plans guide our commitment to seeking support from State and Federal Governments for six key advocacy priority areas:

Future Ready Footscray	Mental Health & Wellbeing	Air Quality & Environmental Health
Flood Recovery and Mitigation	Connectivity for a Growing City	Community Infrastructure

Advocacy Partnerships

In addition to our own advocacy efforts, Council continues to maintain strategic partnerships and alliances that support Maribyrnong's interests with regional advocacy bodies including LeadWest, M9, MAV, and WoMEDA.

The Council advocacy priorities outlined in this document are aligned with the new advocacy priorities launched by LeadWest and M9 to take to the 2026 State Election.

These include:

LeadWest: Liveable and Healthy Communities, Better-Connected West, and Sustainable and Vibrant West
 M9: Community Safety, Infrastructure for Growth, and Better Transport and Connectivity.



Maribyrnong at a glance



98,812

Total Population (2025)



57%

Growth by 2051



38%

Born overseas



55,900

Local Jobs



56,976

Employed Residents



9,150

Local Businesses



Future Ready Footscray

Overview

Footscray is facing significant challenges that are undermining community resilience, local amenity, and the area's broader reputation. These issues have had a tangible impact on local businesses and the vibrancy of the precinct. Council has endorsed the *Footscray Place Plan 2025-26*, to commence the revitalisation of the area in the short term. However, a clear vision for Footscray's revitalisation is needed, as are cross-government partnerships, to guide housing and business investment and redevelopment. A broad advocacy approach is needed to tackle the complex planning, housing, development, transport, economic, and cultural issues. In addition, targeted advocacies will address specific projects and initiatives, to improve amenity, consolidate public transport links, activate quiet precincts, improve community safety, and gain social and affordable housing.

By aligning efforts across these domains, Council can unlock the full potential of Footscray's built environment, improve community inclusiveness and resilience, boost the day and night economies and restore confidence in the area as a thriving hub for business, culture, and everyday life.

Council is drafting a new Footscray Structure Plan, which will provide a valuable path for our advocacy efforts.



Why this matters

- Strong sense of community safety measures and social programs build trust, connection, and a sense of belonging.
- Improved transport supports growth, accessibility, and community connection.
- Redeveloping the hospital site provides housing, civic infrastructure, and green space.
- Collaborative planning ensures development meets community aspirations and maximises belonging.

Advocacy Objectives

To secure a coordinated, cross-government commitment that addresses the complex and interrelated planning, safety, housing, transport, and economic issues. To drive cultural opportunities facing Footscray and restore its reputation as a thriving urban hub.

Community Benefits



**Improved
Safety
& Wellbeing**



**Better
Connectivity
& Access**



**Activated
Public
Spaces**



**Revitalised
Local
Economy**



**Inclusive
Urban
Renewal**

Ask	Description
Footscray CBD Revitalisation	Council seeks to secure a coordinated, cross-government commitment that addresses the complex and interrelated planning, housing, transport, economic, and social challenges facing Footscray, with the aim of restoring its reputation as a thriving urban hub.
Footscray Transport Interchange	Council urges the Victorian Government to take immediate action to fund the Detailed Design Scheme for the Footscray Transport Interchange, and provide a clear timeline for construction to ensure the precinct can safely and efficiently accommodate future demand.
Creative West Delivery	Upon completion of the Creative West Detailed Design, Council will seek funding for the construction phase, shared between the State and Federal Government, along with municipal and philanthropic funds.
Existing Footscray Hospital	Council calls on the Victorian Government to commit to the timely remediation of vacated areas of the Footscray Hospital site, to transform it into a vibrant, multi-purpose community hub. With Maribyrnong's population rapidly growing, this precinct must deliver green space, affordable housing, essential community services, and respectful heritage reuse.



Mental Health & Wellbeing

Overview

Mental health services in Maribyrnong are struggling to keep up with demand and have limited capacity to respond quickly. The system is complex and difficult to navigate, especially for young people seeking help.

Council is advocating to the State and Federal Governments to ensure all Maribyrnong residents, including those in hard-to-reach and diverse communities, have support when they need it most. Council acknowledges the State Government's response to the Mental Health Royal Commission and the establishment of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local services across the state, including in Maribyrnong. However, gaps in ongoing mental health prevention and treatment continue to widen, adding further strain on our rapidly growing population. The risk is poorer mental health outcomes and barriers to accessing services.

Whilst mental health is not a Council responsibility, it will advocate to host an outreach service, starting with a pilot program to gain evidence-based support for an ongoing fully funded clinic.

Why this matters

- Without accessible, responsive mental health care, people are at greater risk of experiencing long-term harm.
- Poor mental health outcomes are often compounded by experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and stigma, particularly among youth, hard-to-reach, diverse and LGBTIQ+ communities and people facing addiction or housing stress.
- In a rapidly growing and diverse community like Maribyrnong, these gaps are widening, placing even more pressure on families, schools, frontline services, and overall community resilience.
- Urgent and coordinated action is needed to avoid entrenching disadvantage and missing a critical opportunity to build a healthier, more resilient future for our young people.



Advocacy Objectives

Partner with State and Federal Governments to address the urgent need for 'missing middle' mental health services in Maribyrnong and deliver a fully funded, inclusive mental health and wellbeing hub, recognising that access to safe, secure, and affordable housing is fundamental to supporting mental health within the community.

Community Benefits



Improved
Access
to Support



Healthier,
More Resilient
Young People



Stronger
Social
Connections



Reduced
Stigma



Community
Wellbeing
& Safety

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Our Asks

Ask

Description

Fill the well-recognised gap in mental health services in Maribyrnong.

Council seeks a commitment from the State Government to implement community-based solutions, as recommended by the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system. This includes locally available multidisciplinary teams providing both clinical and non-clinical support. This approach seeks to fill the 'missing middle' gap by ensuring that people can access care early, locally, and in a coordinated manner.

Fund a youth mental health outreach trial hosted by Maribyrnong City Council.

Council seeks State or Federal Government support to fund a trial to collaborate with a specialist youth mental health service to run an outreach service at a Maribyrnong City Council facility.

Mental Health and Wellbeing forum to develop a plan for services in Melbourne's West.

Council calls for the State and Federal Government to establish a regional forum with community leaders, services, partners and all levels of government to develop a targeted plan for mental health and wellbeing in Melbourne's west. A place-based approach will ensure that investment is equitable, culturally responsive and tailored to local needs.



Air Quality & Environmental Health

Overview

Maribyrnong has some of the worst health statistics in Australia, including the highest rate of hospital admissions for young people with respiratory illnesses; 171 per cent above the national average. In light of this, Council is calling on State and Federal Governments to take action on air quality in Melbourne's inner west through a range of policies and practical measures.

Why this matters

Clean air is a basic human right, but in May 2023, Council declared a health emergency, with figures in *The Social Health Atlas of Australia* showing City of Maribyrnong residents face a:

- 40 per cent higher risk of ischemic heart disease than the national average
- 26 per cent above average risk of premature mortality by respiratory system disease
- 41 per cent above average risk for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- 41 per cent above average risk of hospital admission by asthma
- 40 per cent above average risk of stroke (highest rate in Victoria).

The West Gate Tunnel project is set to reduce truck traffic along several major arterial roads in Maribyrnong. However, with truck traffic concentrated into the tunnel, proper monitoring, and action will be needed to ensure there is no additional impact on local air quality.

Council is also concerned about State and Federal financial disincentives for electric cars and heavy transport.

Meanwhile, it is working to increase tree canopy coverage across the municipality to help make our urban areas greener, cooler and more environmentally resilient. Urban greening is also a LeadWest priority.



Advocacy Objective

Council urges action by all levels of government to improve air quality and associated liveability outcomes in Maribyrnong, including monitoring and managing transport and industry emissions, promoting EV access, and the expansion of urban greening and tree canopy programs.

Community Benefits



Improved
Public Health



Cleaner Air
For All



Greener,
Cooler
Streets



Cleaner
Transport
Options



Equitable
Environmental
Outcomes

Ask	Description
West Gate Tunnel Ventilation Stack Air Filters	Council calls on the Victorian Government to address community concerns and install air filters in the West Gate Tunnel ventilation stacks. It also seeks transparent monitoring, proactive planning, and responsive action to manage the impact of fumes from transport routes including the West Gate Tunnel and industry on local residents.
Urban Greening and Cooling	Council requests the State and Federal Government support its Urban Forest Strategy to increase urban greening and cooling across the City's streetscapes by increasing canopy cover by 20 per cent. This includes funding for the installation of public realm projects such as new median strips to accommodate new trees.
Air Pollution Monitoring	Council seeks an increased number of air pollution monitoring stations along main roads, outside schools, the new West Gate Tunnel Cycling Veloway and along Williamstown Road and other arterials expected to receive more truck traffic after the West Gate Tunnel opening.
Electric Vehicle Incentives	Council calls on State and Federal Governments to commit to a rapid shift from diesel and petrol to electric vehicles by promoting, funding and incentivising the electrification of light vehicles, while also reversing disincentives to EV ownership such as the road user tax.
Williamstown Road Truck Ban	Council supports truck curfews along Williamstown Road, particularly overnight and on weekends, to help reduce noise and pollution.



Connectivity for a Growing City

Overview

Melbourne's West is one of Australia's fastest growing regions, which is leading to a strain on road and public transport networks. Infrequent public transport services, poor intermodal connectivity and indirect bus routes, lead to greater levels of car dependence. The City of Maribyrnong sits at the gateway to the western suburbs. Our community is directly impacted by the significant amount of through traffic travelling between the Port of Melbourne, Melbourne CBD to other western municipalities. In addition, our City hosts a number of busy arterial roads that bring excessive truck traffic through the municipality and present safety concerns for vulnerable road users. Because these roads are state-owned, Council's ability to act is limited without direct support from the Victorian Government. Action and investment that improves connectivity and improves transport choices will result in a less congested Maribyrnong.

Why this matters

- Melbourne's western suburbs are growing fast, but transport infrastructure hasn't kept pace. This leads to overburdened roads, infrequent, unreliable public transport, and fewer mobility options, which increases car dependence.
- A seamless public transport interchange at Footscray linking train, tram, and bus services is essential to ensuring sustainable growth in passenger numbers.
- Being at the gateway to the west, Maribyrnong bears the brunt of through traffic between the CBD and Port of Melbourne to outer western suburbs, resulting in increased air pollution and risks for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Council has limited control over the municipality's busiest roads to improve safety as they are State Government managed.



Advocacy Objective

To secure Government support that reduces car and truck dependency and improves road safety in Maribyrnong, by improving public transport modes, frequency, connectivity, active transport infrastructure, and traffic signalling.

Community Benefits



Safer Streets



Reduced Congestion



Lower Emissions



Improved Access & Mobility



Greater Equity

Ask	Description
Footscray Transport Interchange	Council urges the Victorian Government to take immediate action to fund the Detailed Design Scheme for the Footscray Transport Interchange, and provides a clear timeline for construction to ensure the precinct can safely and efficiently accommodate future demand.
New and Increased Bus Services	Council asks the State Government to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Infrastructure Victoria's recommendation for a bus rapid transit route between Highpoint Maribyrnong and Tarneit, via Ashley Street and Tottenham railway station. • Introduce bus reform to provide fast, frequent and direct services.
Installation of traffic signals along Hampstead Road, Maidstone	Council requests State Government funding for a fully signalised intersection to ensure this important infrastructure upgrade is delivered.
Installation of traffic signals along Hopkins Steet, Footscray.	Council requests State Government funding for a fully signalised intersection to ensure this important infrastructure upgrade is delivered.
Installation of Pedestrian Traffic Lights on Francis Street at Stony Creek	Council requests State Government funding for the installation of a pedestrian operated signal on Francis Street, safely linking the Stony Creek pedestrian and cycling paths east of Hawkhurst Street.
Williamstown Road Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety Monitoring	Council seeks to collaborate with the State Government to monitor and address safety concerns that may arise from additional truck traffic along Williamstown Road after the West Gate Tunnel opening.
Williamstown Road Truck Curfews and Bans	Council supports truck curfews along Williamstown Road, particularly overnight and on weekends, to help reduce noise, pollution, and safety risks for residents.
Western extension of Tram Network	Council calls for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Sunshine to Highpoint high-frequency and high-capacity public transport connection. • Construction of accessible tram stops along all of route 82. • Plan for the extension of tram route 57 into the Maribyrnong Defence site.

Flood Recovery & Mitigation

Overview

Record-breaking rain in Victoria during October 2022 led to the Maribyrnong River breaching its banks. The flood impacted hundreds of City of Maribyrnong residents and more than 500 properties. Despite a significant recovery effort, many people were unable to return to their homes for months and some continue to face challenges related to insurance and repairs. Council is calling for State and Federal Government to act on the outcomes of the Melbourne Water Flood Mitigation Study, and community concerns surrounding resilient rebuilding, insurance claims, emergency early warning systems and the economic impact of the floods.

Why this matters

- The resilient retrofit programs introduced in NSW and Queensland encourage rebuilding in ways that promote safer housing, reduce future insurance claims, support community stability and potentially save lives and money in the long term.
- After major disasters, insurance becomes a barrier, with higher premiums, reduced coverage and claims being delayed or denied. Fair access to insurance protects vulnerable households and businesses and restores trust in the system.
- The October 2022 flood exposed weaknesses in current systems. Improved flood warnings enables better evacuation and response procedures and reduces panic and misinformation.
- An independent report into the local economic impacts of the flood quantifies will help inform policy and strengthen advocacy for future mitigation and support programs.



Advocacy Objective

We're calling on State and Federal Governments to support community members impacted by the 2022 Maribyrnong Flood and to invest in vital measures to prevent and reduce future flood impacts in line with the Melbourne Water Flood Mitigation Study.

Community Benefits



Safer, Flood Resilient Homes & Infrastructure



Reduced Flood Risk



Improved Emergency Warnings



Informed Recovery Planning



Fairer Insurance Outcomes

Ask	Description
Incentivise resilient rebuilding through schemes such as a GST refund on materials or delivery of a resilient retrofit program.	The Victorian government reconsiders its position outlined in the response to the Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria and establishes a program or scheme to incentivise resilient rebuilding in flood zones including a retrofit program.
Address the issue of insurance availability, rising premiums and improve case handling from insurance providers	That the Federal Government implements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government funded schemes to address insurance availability and affordability, such as an insurance subsidy for vulnerable or at-risk residents or a national insurance scheme. 2. Stronger regulations to oversee the handling of insurance claims and unreasonable premium increases. 3. Funding for a program including a panel of specialist builders to be available free of charge to community to validate insurance scope of works documents.
State and Federal Governments invests in improvements to the Australian warning system for emergencies	The Federal Government provides additional funding and support for research and enhancement of comprehensive Early Warning Systems for emergencies across Australia, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allocate additional funding for research, development, and implementation of advanced Early Warning Systems across Australia to improve accuracy and timeliness of warnings 2. Review and enhance the flood warning system as part of the transfer of this function from Melbourne Water to the Bureau of Meteorology, with an emphasis on warning accuracy and timeliness 3. Continue to promote the integration of early warning systems with emergency management frameworks and communication channels to enable stakeholder collaboration and seamless dissemination of warnings 4. Consider the accessibility needs of at-risk communities in system improvements, including the culturally and linguistically diverse community 5. Invest in accessible public education campaigns to raise awareness about effectively responding to warnings
Flood mitigation infrastructure, including commitment of funding the outcomes of the Melbourne Water Flood Mitigation Study	A commitment from the Victorian Government to strengthen flood mitigation measures along the Maribyrnong River in response to the October 2022 flood event, including a commitment to fund the recommendations from the Melbourne Water Flood Mitigation Study.
Independent report on the economic impact of the October 2022 flood event, including a summary of its cost on residents, business and government.	The Victorian Government delivers a comprehensive report that quantifies the economic and financial impacts of the October 2022 flood event on residents, businesses, local, state and federal government.

Community Infrastructure

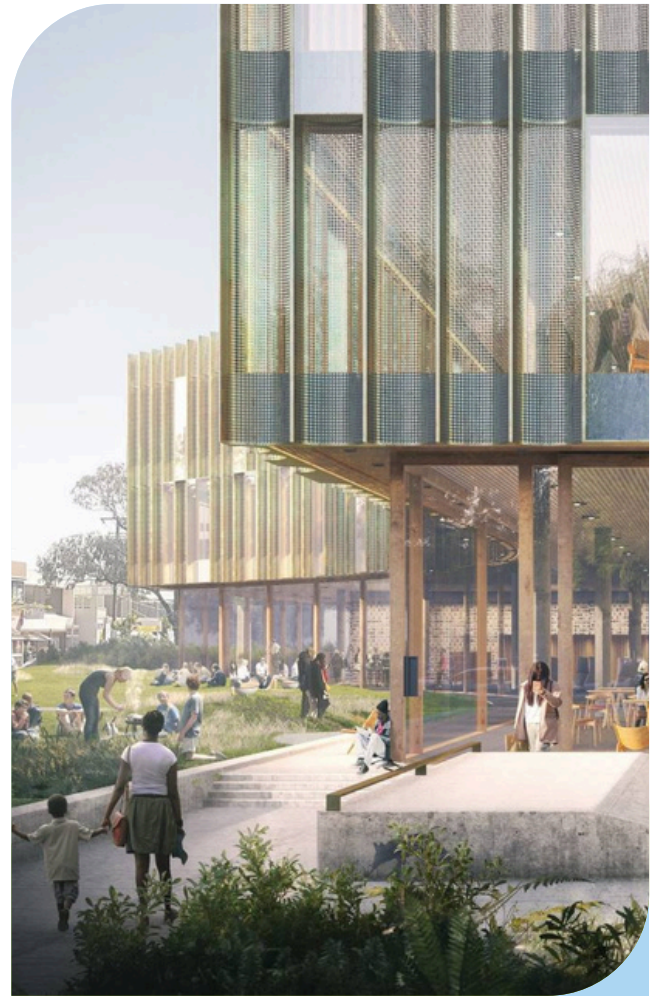
Overview

As Melbourne's West and Maribyrnong grow, quality community infrastructure is essential to meet the region's needs.

From arts and culture to housing and sport, facilities must keep pace so people can connect, create, and stay active. Investing in regional projects such as the Mclvor Reserve Indoor Sports Stadium and Creative West will secure lasting social, cultural, and economic benefits for the west. Also crucial is the unlocking of Crown land such as the Maribyrnong Defence Site, to boost Maribyrnong's available housing stock and public spaces.

Why this matters

- Investing in arts and culture strengthens community identity, attracts visitors, and drives economic growth by supporting vibrant creative industries.
- Unlocking the Maribyrnong Defence Site will deliver thousands of new homes close to the CBD, easing housing pressures and improving affordability.
- Modern sports, recreation, and community facilities promote healthy, active lifestyles and provide young people with opportunities to thrive.
- Indoor sport and event venues are in demand across Melbourne, and the proposed Indoor Sports Stadium at Mclvor Reserve will fill a significant gap for such a facility in the inner and western suburbs.



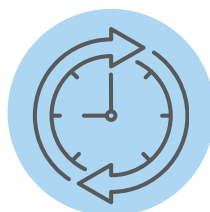
Advocacy Objective

We're calling on State and Federal Governments to back our growing city, investing in vital community infrastructure, and unlocking new sites to build thriving communities that deliver lasting social, cultural, and economic benefits.

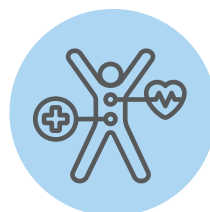
Community Benefits



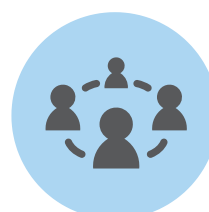
**Economic
Investment
& Growth**



**Long-term
Impact**



**Enhanced
Wellbeing
& Health**



**Social
Engagement
& Inclusion**



**Increased
Housing Supply
& Affordability**

Ask	Description
Mclvor Reserve Indoor Sports Stadium	Council seeks a joint funding commitment from the State and Federal Governments to cover 66 per cent of the total cost for the proposed Indoor Sports Stadium. The remaining funding will be sourced through municipal rates, targeted grants, and borrowings.
Creative West Construction Phase	Upon completion of the Creative West Detailed Design, Council will seek funding for the construction phase shared between the State and Federal Government, alongside Council and philanthropic funds.
Maribyrnong Defence Site	Council calls on the Federal Government to update the community on its plans for the Maribyrnong Defence Site. We seek to collaborate with the Federal and State Governments for the timely remediation and development of the Maribyrnong Defence Site that will support diverse housing options, heritage restoration, public and active transport, and community infrastructure, while protecting nature, biodiversity, and open space.





Maribyrnong
CITY COUNCIL

maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/advocacy