

MARIBYRNONG

# MESSENGER

Autumn 2025

www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au



HYDE STREET BAND

MORE THAN BOOKS: LIBRARY OF THINGS **FOOTSCRAY TOWN** HALL REOPENS TO THE COMMUNITY

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

#### Telcome to the Autumn Edition of Maribyrnong Messenger.

It was a pleasure to welcome our community to the official opening of the new Civic Precinct and Community Hub earlier this month. It was great to see so many taking the chance to look around, wander the halls of the newly renovated Town Hall, spend time in the community park, and absorb all the changes.

This Project enables more opportunities for our community to utilise its spaces. Read about the Open Day and the Civic Precinct and Community Hub on page 6.

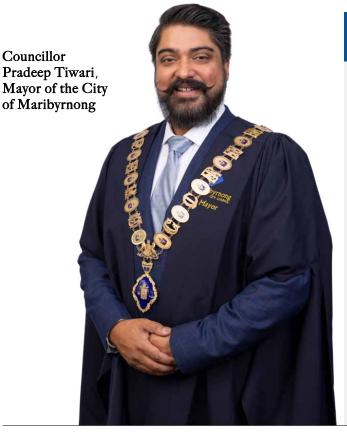
In December last year we completed more than six months of engagement with our community to revisit the Community Vision, support the development of a new Council Plan, and review the Asset, and Financial plans. Thank you to all those who engaged with us online or in-person in the opportunity to help influence these key strategic documents that will service delivery for our City over the next four years. Read more, including what's on the engagement calendar this month on pages 8 and 9.

You'll find plenty more in this edition of Maribyrnong Messenger, including the launch of a new youth engagement hub to capture the views of our young people, and jam with the iconic Hyde Street Youth Band.

Happy reading.

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#### **COUNCIL MEETING DATES**

The meetings will be held at the Town Hall.

Tuesday 18, 6.30pm: Council

Tuesday 25, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

Tuesday 15, 6.30pm: Council

Tuesday 29, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

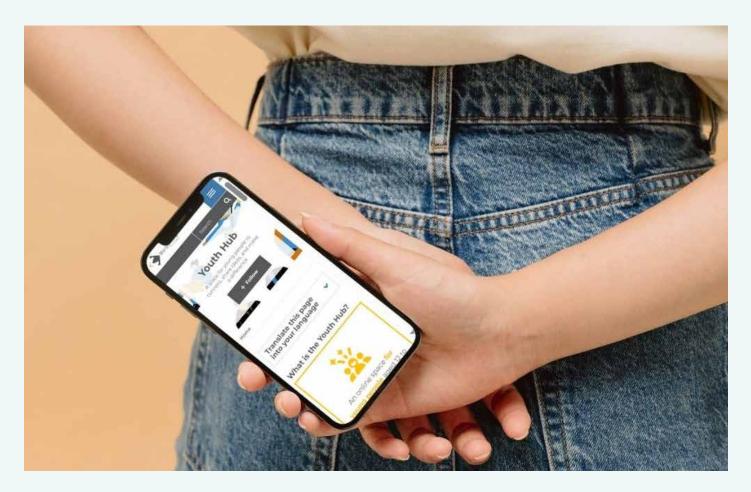
Tuesday 20, 6.30pm: Council

Tuesday 27, 6.30pm: City Development Delegated Committee

Meetings are livestreamed via Council's YouTube channel, and community members can submit questions for public question time online before the meeting commences.

Please note the meeting schedule is current at the time of printing. Visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/meetings or phone 9688 0200 for more information.

### CAPTURING THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MARIBYRNONG



### A NEW ONLINE PLATFORM SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IS NOW LIVE

The Youth Hub has been created for 12-25 year olds who live, work, study or hang out in our City to share ideas, and make a difference.

Leveraging Council's existing Your City Your Voice engagement platform, the Youth Hub is a dedicated space on the existing site that aims to amplify the voice of young people to help ensure Council decisions accurately reflect their aspirations.

Young people have been actively engaged in the platform's development, providing feedback on function and design elements to ensure it is engaging and relevant to their needs. Funded by the State Government's Engage Victoria grant, it is hoped young people will see the Youth Hub as a

safe space to have conversations and shape decisions about services and activities they would like to see in the municipality.

Young people can subscribe to stay updated on current and upcoming projects where they can share their views, helping to inform decisions made on initiatives and opportunities that relate to them to better support community building and participation for the City's youth.

Log in to share your ideas for school holiday activities and let us know what you think about the current programs and services for young people across our City.

Visit yourcityyourvoice.com.au/youth-hub to find out more.

# MANY HANDS MAKE AMAZING MUSIC

FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS, THE HYDE STREET YOUTH BAND HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN DEVELOPING MUSICAL TALENT AMONGST THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR MUNICIPALITY.



S pecialising in brass instruments for children and young people aged 5-25 years, it is made up of three youth musical ensembles in the traditional British 'brass band' style. There is the Brass Class for children with little or no experience, the Junior Band for children with some level of experience, and the Hyde Street Youth Band for more experienced musicians. Across the ensembles, the bands play a range of music, including classical, marches, hymns, contemporary music and popular movie themes.

While the majority of the 63 members are from the local area, there is no geographic restrictions on members. Originally formed as the school band for Footscray Primary School in 1928 and based there, in 2022 the Band relocated to the Raleigh Road Activity Centre in Maribyrnong.

While a shift away from its Footscray beginnings, having stability after a number of shifts in-between and disruptions through COVID, they're now settled in their new home. Secretary Linda Ely said they realise how privileged they are to be supported by Council with the premises, and with the help of triennial grants. "Without that, we couldn't really exist, or not in the form or with the opportunities we can offer at the moment."

Conscious of the barriers some budding young musicians may face, one of the Band's aims is to do what it can to make the Youth Band accessible to as many young people as possible. "Music is one of those things that can be really expensive for a lot of families, which makes it potentially not available to a lot of kids because of the costs of lessons and instruments. One of the main things we do to address that is include instrument hire and weekly rehearsals as part of an annual membership," Linda said.

Instruments offered include the trombone, euphonium, baritone horn, tuba, cornet, tenor horn, flugel horn, and a range of percussion instruments.

The Hyde Street Youth Band takes immense pride in building a community for its students and committee to look forward to every week, and regardless of background, musical ability or disability, Linda adds "a point is made to make sure there is a place for everyone."

In years past the old Footscray Football Club would let the Band play around the boundary at half-time; helpers dragging a tarpaulin behind where the crowd could shower their generosity upon the players.

In keeping with tradition, the young musicians today perform together at the AFL Grand Final Parade (minus the tarp) and other events such as ANZAC Day.

Without wishing to 'blow their own trumpet' the Hyde Street Band, which has been an integral part of our community since 1928, has also scored a number of successes in competitions over the years – winning its very first Victorian State Schools Association championship in 1931 and becoming "quite famous" after holding the record for the number of wins in that competition from 1931 to 1966.

Fast forward sixty years and there is no shortage of silver



trophies and gold medals in the brass Band's trophy cabinet. Of 11 young musicians who competed across 21 sections in the Victorian Bands' League State Solo and Ensemble Championships in 2024, they claimed the title of Junior Champion of Champions, two Open Champions, nine Junior State Champions, and nine placegetters.

The Hyde Street Youth Band also placed first in the Junior B Grade Brass Band section, and second in the Open C Grade Brass Band section at the Victorian State Band Championships last year.

Being part of the Hyde Street Youth Band has also helped open doors into the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music for some players – 20-year-old Fergus Moorehouse, a tuba player, who has been part of the Band since 2017, among them.

"Being a member of the band has offered me an incredible breadth of opportunities. The community has allowed me to network with internationally-renowned brass players, and as a result, I started studying at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music in 2023, under the mentorship of MSO (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra) player Tim Buzbee," Fergus said.

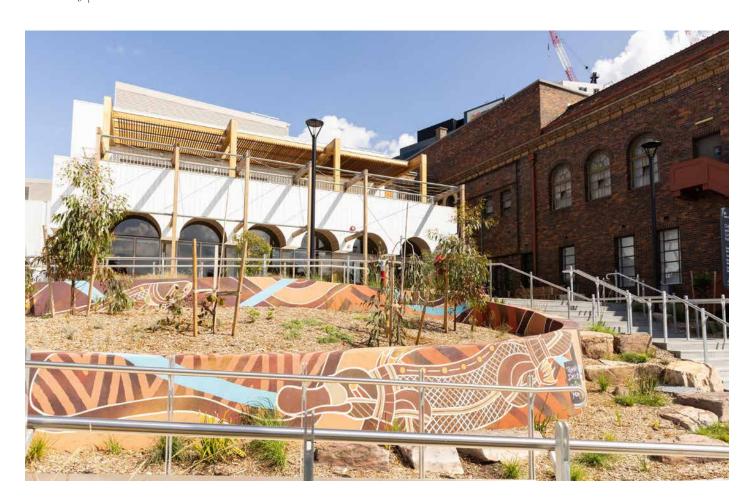
"This would not have been possible had I not been welcomed into the Hyde Street Youth Band and greater brass community. My passion for music was sparked here, and has been nurtured and encouraged constantly."

Ben Gittens, the 2024 State Solo and Ensemble Championships' Junior Champion of Champions, who has been accepted to the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music this year, also credits the Youth Band for helping kick-start his musical journey.

"I didn't own a soprano cornet at first, so the band let me use one of theirs, free of charge. Everyone, from the oldest to the youngest player, gets lots of encouragement. I really recommend Hyde Street," he said.

For more information about Hyde Street Youth Band visit **hsyb.org.au** 





### OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CIVIC PRECINCT AND COMMUNITY HUB

ON 9 FEBRUARY,
WE WELCOMED THE
COMMUNITY TO JOIN US
IN OPENING OUR NEW
FACILITY. FOOTSCRAY
YARRAVILLE CITY BAND
ENTERTAINED GUESTS IN
THE FORUM, WHILE THE
REGENT STRING QUARTET
PLAYED CLASSICAL MUSIC
IN THE RECEPTION ROOM
AS ATTENDEES TOURED
THE ALMOST 90-YEAR OLD
FOOTSCRAY TOWN HALL.

The Civic Precinct and Community Hub is a modern, environmentally friendly space that pays homage to the rich history of the site and wider City, strengthening the civic and community connection.

Refurbishment and conservation works in the iconic Town Hall building will ensure the continued use and enjoyment of the building by our community for years to come. A new forum space, the physical link between the old Town Hall and new civic offices, includes an entry off Hyde Street connecting to the community meeting spaces and new community park, with the Napier Street entrance also now reinstated.

The new community park features open lawn areas for gatherings, picnics, community events and more intimate get-togethers for smaller groups. The terraced rock boulder garden, incorporating a gathering space, celebrates country along with the use of indigenous plantings in the garden area. The park also includes, seating, accessible paths, ramps, and stairs. The redevelopment was funded in part by a \$10 million dollar loan from the State Government's Community Infrastructure Loans Scheme, which provides access to low-interest subsidised loans.

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#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

# FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS OF SERVICE DELIVERY



THE COUNCIL PLAN IS A CRITICAL DOCUMENT THAT GUIDES WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE DO IT. IT IS REVIEWED FOLLOWING THE ELECTION OF A NEW COUNCIL PROVIDING THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY TO SHAPE THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

Since July 2024, Council has been conversing with our community on key areas they would like us to focus on for the next four years. During this time more than 2,500 residents have engaged with the project providing 700 comments online or at in-person opportunities, and a deliberative engagement process.

The latter included Three Foundations for Tomorrow workshops with a panel of residents, 17 Kitchen Table Conversations and an online survey seeking answers to the same remit posed to our panel.

#### We heard:

- Support for maintaining or improving the service offering currently delivered.
- Support for infrastructure (both physical and social) that keeps pace with our growing population.
- A willingness to accept higher up-front costs for more sustainable outcomes and cost savings in future.
- A love of libraries and community centres as places that build community connection.
- A desire for more open green space and trees.

- Care and concern for vulnerable people in the community

   affordable housing, foodbanks, free or low cost
   opportunities for life-long learning or events.
- Requests for improved amenity from repairing footpaths and roads, through to more public toilets.
- Opportunities for communications and engagement opportunities that share the programs and services on offer throughout the City.

During the deliberative process specifically it was further understood:

- There are many services Council is required to provide, and therefore there are limitations to what can be considered 'discretionary'.
- Council finds itself in a challenging financial situation and has limited 'levers' to pull to improve its financial situation.

The Council Plan will be underpinned by a set of strategic objectives informed by this feedback. We'll be sharing a draft towards the end of the first quarter of 2025, for further comment, along with a revised Asset Plan and Financial Plan.

# WE'RE REVIEWING OUR LOCAL LAWS

LOCAL LAWS ARE DESIGNED
TO MANAGE AND REGULATE
ACTIVITIES, TO PROTECT
THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT
AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING,
AS WELL AS HELP US REGULATE
ACTIVITIES ON COUNCILCONTROLLED LAND AND ROADS.

They can affect everyone in their daily lives, and address a range of matters from the keeping of animals through to waste disposal. Local laws are designed to help make our City cleaner, safer and more enjoyable for everyone, and help ensure the community operates efficiently and safely by establishing regulations tailored to the local area.

As part of our review, we've identified a number of categories where the current rules might be improved or strengthened.

We will be sharing the proposed changes for community input in March on our community engagement portal, Your City Your Voice. To sign up for updates, head to yourcityyourvoice.com.au/LocalLaws

Your input will help shape the new draft Local Law, which will be open for further comment later this year before being presented to Council for adoption.





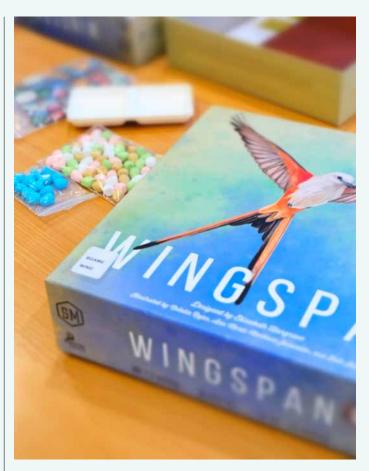


# BOOKS

### We are expanding our Library of Things to include a range of everyday items for library members to borrow.

We know while many people may want to try a new project or hobby, they may feel held back by the cost of tools, equipment, and the uncertainty of how often they will actually use them. This where our Library of Things comes in, providing a variety of items – from tools and appliances to games and creative resources – members of Maribyrnong Libraries can borrow for free.

For those unfamiliar, a Library of Things is a communityfocused service that reimagines borrowing beyond books. It not only encourages a culture of sharing, helping to reduce



waste, but also provides a more affordable way to try out new pastimes.

Instead of owning and investing in items you may rarely use, our Library of Things means they can be borrowed only when needed and returned afterwards. This creative approach to community lending supports sustainability in everyday life, helping both your wallet and the planet.

We have leveraged your feedback from a Collections Survey in March 2024 to expand our catalogue of 'things', beyond the smaller collection of introductory items released at the end of 2024, with every item selected to best reflect the genuine needs and interests of our community.

In current times where sustainability and the rising cost of living are key concerns, it is more important than ever our community has access to resources that enable creativity and leisure without financial strain or environmental impact.

Through our Library of Things, you can now try your hand at something new, without the cost or clutter. Make the most of this exciting community resource and browse through our available items on offer at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/LibraryOfThings

Join us for an official launch of the Library of Things with Dr Kate Luckins, author of Live More with Less. Thursday 27 February 6-7.30pm Braybrook Library

#### ENVIRONMENT

## SOLAR SAVERS

### CONNECT WITH RELIABLE SOLAR SPECIALISTS

Solar Savers is a program available to residents and businesses in Maribyrnong, providing access to expert guidance for selecting and installing top-quality solar and battery systems.

The initiative helps participants lower their energy costs while also contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions. By connecting with solar professionals, residents can receive custom advice tailored to their specific energy needs.

Choosing the right solar or battery system can be complex, but Solar Savers simplifies the process by offering reliable advice and assistance. The program ensures participants can confidently invest in sustainable energy for their homes or businesses, paving the way for long-term savings and environmental benefits.

Register your interest at the below website and the Solar Savers team will assess your eligibility and connect you with trusted professionals who will guide you through the process, from initial consultation to installation.

Visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/solar-savers





#### TACKLING FOOD WASTE IN MARIBYRNONG

On average, food waste makes up 25 percent of general rubbish in bins in Maribyrnong, while only six percent of Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) bins contain food waste. This highlights a significant opportunity for improvement in how we manage food scraps at home.

Currently, many residents are placing more food waste in their red-lidded general rubbish bins rather than their greenlidded FOGO bins. However, Braybrook and West Footscray are setting the standard, leading the way as the best sorters of food scraps in our City. Their efforts demonstrate that small, consistent actions can make a big difference.

By collecting and recycling food scraps, we can reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, where it produces harmful methane gases. Instead, food scraps placed in FOGO bins are turned into nutrient-rich compost, which helps farms and gardens thrive. Today's food scraps can literally grow tomorrow's fruit and vegetables.

#### WHAT GOES INTO MY FOGO BIN?

Your FOGO bin can accept food leftovers, fruit and vegetable scraps, dairy products, eggshells, seafood, meat, bones, bread, pasta, rice, and garden waste.

It is crucial to keep plastic bags, food packaging, and "compostable" caddy liners out of your FOGO bin to avoid contaminating the compost. By doing so, you are playing a vital role in protecting the environment and supporting sustainable practices in Maribyrnong.

For more information on how you can Bin it Better, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/bin-it-better

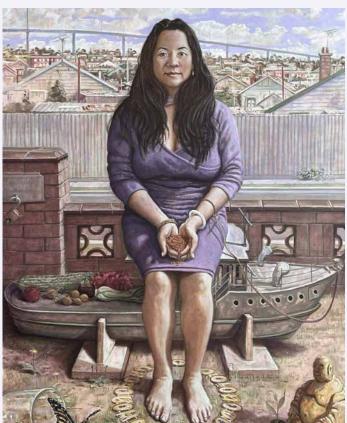
# RE-DISCOVERING COUNCIL'S ART COLLECTION



COUNCIL'S ART COLLECTION BOASTS OVER 500 PAINTINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS, CRAFTS, CERAMICS, SCULPTURES, MONUMENTS AND WORKS ON PAPER RECORDING MARIBYRNONG'S CULTURE, HISTORY, ENVIRONMENT AND PEOPLE.

The Collection contributes to the celebration and documentation of our cultural, social and historical identity, creating a sense of belonging by reflecting, interpreting and preserving innovative, contemporary and heritage artworks while also fostering an understanding, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual and public arts.

Council's Collection includes several mayoral portraits celebrating individuals who have shaped the City's history – the majority, created around the turn of the twentieth century, depict male Mayors in normal attire and official regalia. Paul Borg's depiction of Mai Ho, Maribyrnong's first female mayor and Australia's first female Vietnamese-born mayor, marks a shift in Maribyrnong's relationship to and portrayal of the 'City Fathers'.



Mai Ho, who grew up in Saigon, fled Vietnam aged 21, embarking on a perilous journey to Australia, where she found solace and a sense of belonging within the Footscray community. As a single parent raising two children, she learnt English, worked as a fruit picker and pursued studies in human resource management, computer operations, and beauty therapy. Mai Ho went on to open a computer business and a beauty salon before establishing a Vietnamese community support service to help others access opportunities.

In Borg's painting, Mai Ho is depicted in a casual pose; dressed in an unassuming purple dress, her mayoral chain resting on her lap, presenting as an everyday person. A small, symbolic brooch on her chest, conceived by the artist, represents the boat Mai Ho purchased to escape communist rule after the Vietnam War. The purple dress symbolises the colour she wore when her boat was rescued, saving her and 161 others, including her two young children, mother, brother and sister.

With the completion of the Civic Precinct and Community Hub, Council's portrait of Mai Ho has been rehung in the heritage Town Hall building, along with a number of other works.

## CONNECTED COMMUNITY

COUNCIL COMMUNITY CENTRES WILL BE HOSTING SPECIAL EVENTS NEXT MONTH TO CELEBRATE UPCOMING OBSERVANCES THAT CELEBRATE DIVERSITY. THIS INCLUDES CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK, TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY, CHILDREN'S WEEK, NAIDOC WEEK, AND IDAHOBIT DAY.

By organising events that celebrate diverse demographics, Council aims to foster a community culture where everyone feels safe, supported, and connected, regardless of identity or background.

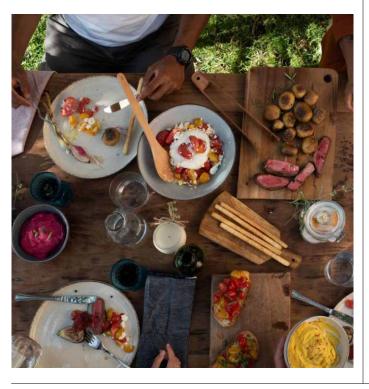
We invite everyone to get involved, check out the upcoming events, and join us in celebrating diversity within our local community.

#### CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK - COMMUNITY LUNCH: EAT TOGETHER

Tuesday 18 March, 12.30-1pm Braybrook Community Hub Free – Bookings are essential

Braybrook Community Centre is offering a special edition of their weekly Community Lunch: Eat Together initiative, a free community lunch where you can meet new people and make connections, with a focus on multicultural foods to mark this week.

mariby rnong. vic. gov. au/Events/Community-Lunch-Eattogether





#### CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK-MULTICULTURAL PICNIC

Sunday 23 March, 12-2pm Ern Shepherd Reserve Free – Bookings are essential

Another pot luck opportunity for our community to come together and bring a plate to share with friends and family. The Eritrean coffee and multicultural sweets are on us. There will also be live music and cultural entertainment.

#### maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/MulticulturalPicnic

For more information on our commitment to inclusive communities, please visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/communitycentres

# TAKE THE PLUNGE WITH OUR MULTICULTURAL SWIM PROGRAM

THE MARIBYRNONG AQUATIC CENTRE HAS LAUNCHED A NEW SWIM PROGRAM TO SUPPORT WOMEN FROM MULTI-CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS TO GAIN CONFIDENCE IN THE WATER.



sing a grant from the Federal Government's Play Our Way program, Council is running a free 10-week program specifically for multicultural women to gain essential swimming skills combining instruction with life-saving techniques with cultural exchanges helping break down barriers and create a stronger and more connected community.

The Swim Unity program recognises the importance of continuing to find opportunities to make water safety education more accessible and culturally relevant, and complements the swimming lesson program available at the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre.

While the first intakes at the end of January and beginning of February are fully booked, two more intakes are planned for later in the year with dates to be announced closer to the time.

For more information please visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/swimunity

#### INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

### FOOTSCRAY WHARF UPGRADES



COUNCIL IS PROPOSING FURTHER UPGRADES TO FACILITIES AND AMENITIES ALONG THE MARIBYRNONG RIVER WATERFRONT TO COMPLEMENT THE COMPLETION IN 2022 OF A NEW 230-METRE-LONG TIMBER BOARDWALK WITH A FIXED LOWER LANDING AND FLOATING PONTOON AT FOOTSCRAY WHARF.

This includes a new public toilet with investigation works scheduled to begin at 47a Moreland Street this month to determine its suitability for the amenity.

The Moreland Street site would include three toilets, one of which would be accessible, and replace the Grimes Reserve location proposed in the Maribyrnong Public Toilet Plan 2019-2029.

A contemplative seat is also being designed by the Blacksmiths for installation mid-year, the Hopkins Street Bridge bouldering wall will receive lighting enhancements to improve safety and visibility, and construction of a shared user path at Grimes Reserve is scheduled to begin in mid-2025.

In addition, the vacant lot on Saltriver Place near the River's edge, previously used as informal car parking, is being transformed into an open space complete with a footpath connection, lawn area, garden bed planting, tree planting and picnic table.

These upgrades funded in part by the West Gate Tunnel Project are part of a broader effort to revitalise the Footscray Wharf and create a vibrant, well-connected space with the amenities our community has been asking for.

For more information, please visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/footscraywharf

#### HOW TO CONTACT YOUR COUNCILLOR



**BLUESTONE WARD** CR PRADEEP TIWARI E: cr.tiwari@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au Ph: 0423 887 493



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**BRAYBROOK WARD** CR CUC LAM E: cr.lam@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au Ph: 0429 383 099



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**BURNDAP WARD** CR MOHAMED SEMRA E: cr.semra@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au Ph: 0423 778 507



WATTLE WARD CR ELENA PEREYRA E: cr.pereyra@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au Ph: 0423 836 555



**RIVER WARD** CR SUSAN YENGI E: cr.yengi@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au Ph: 0423 769 995

You can also write to your Ward Councillor: c/- Maribyrnong City Council, PO Box 58, West Footscray 3012. If you don't know who your Ward Councillor is, please contact Customer Service on 9688 0200.

For requests, comments and questions about Council services and programs, go to maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or call Customer Service on 9688 0200.

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