

CRUMBZ DELI

ELEVATED DELI CLASSICS



Footscray has earned its reputation as one of Melbourne's most exciting foodie hubs, known for its diversity, bold flavours, and independent operators who consistently raise the bar. The latest addition to this thriving food scene is Crumbz Deli, a sandwich spot that blends nostalgia, creativity, and serious flavour.

Founded by lifelong friends Richard Le and Nhan Nguyen, Crumbz Deli opened in November 2025 with a clear vision to bring an American and Italian sandwich concept to the heart of the west. Growing up in the area shaped their approach to food, where community, culture, and shared meals were always central. That local connection is felt in everything they do, making Crumbz a natural fit for Footscray.

91 Nicholson Street Mall, Footscray
Instagram: @crumbz_deli

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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MARIBYRNONG MESSENGER

Autumn 2026 | www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

LAURIE KREPP: THE DRIVE TO VOLUNTEER



PLANTING THE SEEDS
FOR A GREENER
MARIBYRNONG

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Maribyrnong Messenger.

Exciting developments are happening in our City which will make a real difference to the inner west. The openings of the West Gate and Metro Tunnels are already improving how we travel, making it easier and faster to get around. Closer to home, the new Footscray Hospital opens this month, delivering modern and accessible healthcare for our growing community.

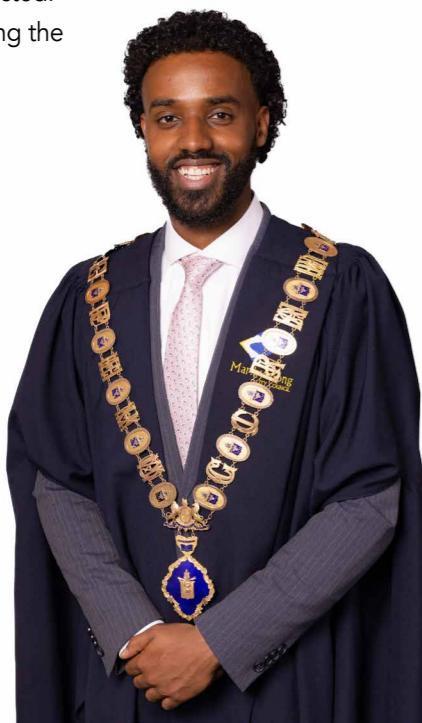
The revitalisation of Maddern Square in late 2025 has transformed the heart of Footscray, creating a vibrant public space and new opportunities for people to meet, relax and connect. These improvements are part of a broader commitment to a safer, more welcoming and lively Footscray. Turn to page 14 to learn more about Dream Big Footscray and the actions underway to support a brighter future for our city.

Also in Footscray is the proposed Creative West project – a major investment jointly funded by the Australian Government and Council. Creative West will be a new hub where arts and culture can thrive, acting as an incubator for creative talent, strengthening the local economy and driving the revitalisation of Footscray. See page 8 to learn more about Creative West and how you can help shape this landmark project.

To stay up to date with Council decisions, local projects and the latest news, I encourage you to sign up for our revamped e-newsletter. It provides a clear summary of council meeting outcomes and highlights what's happening across Maribyrnong, helping you stay informed and connected.

Subscribe by scanning the QR code or visiting maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/News

Councillor
Mohamed Semra
Mayor of the City
of Maribyrnong



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COUNCIL MEETING DATES

The meetings will be held at the Town Hall.

MARCH

Tuesday 17, 6.30pm

APRIL

Tuesday 21, 6.30pm

MAY

Tuesday 9, 6.30pm

Monday 25, 6.30pm, Hearing of Budget Submissions

Maribyrnong City Council is a child safe organisation committed to child safety and supporting the best interests of children in all its operations. Any feedback you have about the safety of our programs, services or spaces can be sent confidentially via email: childsafety@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

A NEW CHAPTER FOR THE MARIBYRNONG YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN 2026



Maribyrnong Youth Advisory Committee (MYAC) is back in 2026 with fresh energy, as we say thank you and farewell to outgoing members and welcome a new group of emerging leaders ready to represent young voices in our community.

MYAC gives young people aged 15-25 a seat at the table. Members meet fortnightly to chat about issues that matter to young people, work with Council staff and Councillors, and help shape local programs, policies and events. Along the way, members build skills in leadership, advocacy and public speaking.

MYAC members also get involved in some standout experiences. In past years, the committee has led youth consultations, hosted forums, and travelled to Canberra to

visit Parliament House, sharing young people's ideas directly with federal decision-makers.

An exciting new addition for 2026 is being planned to trial a Mayor for a Day program. Running bi-monthly throughout the year, selected participants will shadow the Mayor, attend Council meetings and community events, and reflect on the experience with Youth Services staff. This program will be open to a MYAC member, before being offered to local high school students. Participants will also receive a certificate signed by the Mayor – a unique chance to see local leadership in action.

To follow MYAC's journey throughout the year and stay up to date with new members and activities, visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Youth

LAURIE KREPP: THE DRIVE TO VOLUNTEER

Whether it's giving someone the confidence to be on the roads in Melbourne, training new teachers overseas, or making sure people get a good meal – Laurie Krepp always finds a way to help people.



Since 2010, Laurie Krepp has been putting his years of education experience to work as a mentor driver for L2P.

The program is funded by the Traffic Accident Commission and Department of Transport and Planning, supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by Maribyrnong.

The L2P Program matches disadvantaged learner drivers aged 16-21 with a mentor, to help them get the experience and confidence they need to get behind the wheel.

Laurie mostly mentors young people who come from overseas as refugees.

A retired school principal who loves to see his students succeed, Laurie found that volunteering with a sector of the community that was disenfranchised, to help with the empowerment that came with a license and a car, was very rewarding.

"I'd been helping teach people to drive all my life, whether it was friends or daughters, the training was good, and it was a good mix with my professional skill set, given I've been working in education for 50 years," he said.

In the 16 years Laurie has been mentoring young people, he said L2P itself had refined – and that everyone involved has learned on the go and gotten better at it too.

Laurie's volunteering doesn't stop on the road; as he has taken his love of supporting people to grow to the international stage.

With his wife and some friends, they have visited Malaysia almost 30 times – for a few weeks at a time – working in refugee communities, mostly from Myanmar. This support continues back at home, where they help resettle refugees when they arrive in Australia.

This work with refugees includes using their professional skills to run teacher training courses, and raising money in Australia to take back overseas to help run the schools.

"We teach in the schools and run our teacher training program, and have 60 or 70 people come along for it, for a full day of learning how to be teachers because most of them hadn't finished school themselves," Laurie said.

"Then we also help run their organisations and their schools in terms of management, administration and governance – that sort of thing."

And when not supporting the next generation of drivers or teachers, Laurie also finds time to volunteer with the Community Meals Program, run by the West Baptist community in Yarraville, to feed 60-70 people every Monday night.

Given the breadth of his volunteering – as well as working part-time at a school – Laurie said he loves what he does.

"I often feel like I get more than I give, because it's a privilege to get to know someone who overcomes more challenges than I'll ever face. Most of my learners through L2P have come from Myanmar or the Horn of Africa, and I have enjoyed learning firsthand about their culture and their journey to Australia," he said.

"Driving in Melbourne's traffic with an inexperienced learner can have its hair-raising moments, but I've learnt to be patient, but alert to potential problems."

"I feel that preparing learners to face these challenges and get their license is valuable for them and hopefully it makes the roads a little safer for everyone."

One such way in which Laurie said he tried to make a learner feel more comfortable in the driver's seat, was learning to remove one of the barriers, because when you're needing to be aware of the road, be aware of the car and be aware of other drivers – the time it takes to hear something in English and understand it is valuable.

Laurie had one such driver who was still learning English, and got confused with "left" and "right", so she taught him the words in Tigrinya.

This worked well – until I started getting confused with "dagām" (left) and "təkəkel" (right). But it helped her get comfortable," he said.

Laurie said he has received a lot in life, so he enjoys giving back to the people who need it – and he would absolutely recommend people with the ability, should consider volunteering for L2P.

"The training is excellent, and then you continue to learn as you implement the lessons. You learn more about driving by being a mentor – it's made me a better driver, and more equipped to avoid potentially dangerous situations on the road."

LOOKING AHEAD

The L2P Program in Maribyrnong is continuing, with a new local not-for-profit taking on day-to-day delivery from 1 July 2026. Council will stay closely involved, working alongside the new provider and continuing to support and recognise the mentors who make the Program possible. This next chapter builds on the commitment and community spirit shown by long-standing volunteers, with the same focus on helping young people gain their licence and independence.



CELEBRATING SWIM UNITY'S SECOND YEAR

SWIM UNITY CONNECTS MULTICULTURAL WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY AND TEACHES ESSENTIAL SWIMMING SKILLS.

The free program, run at the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre, is about helping women from different backgrounds become safe and confident in and around water.

Maryam Hagi from Maidstone had a fear of water before starting the program.

"Before I came to the program, I had a phobia of the water; I was scared. But now I am happy because I can swim with my kids, and I am comfortable. Everyone told me I improved from the first day, and now I am not the same, not afraid around water."

This program sits alongside MAC's Adult Swim lessons which cater to all adult swimmers, whether they are dusting off old skills or starting from scratch.

Maryam encourages other women to take advantage of Swim Unity for themselves.

"This is a real thing. You can come, look for yourself, join the program, and DO IT."

This program received Australian Government funding in 2025 from the Play Our Way grant.

Lessons start in February for our current intake of Swim Unity. Learn more about the program at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/SwimUnity



PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR A GREENER MARIBYRNONG

COUNCIL MADE GREAT STRIDES IN ITS GREENING INITIATIVES THROUGHOUT THE CITY IN 2025, AND THERE IS MORE EXPECTED TO FLOURISH THIS YEAR.

From tree planting to creating greener pastures throughout Maribyrnong, the comfort, amenity and enjoyment of the community was forefront of our minds in all that we accomplished.

Our City currently has about 49,000 trees in parks, streets and across open spaces – and we are looking at ways to improve that figure.

In our 2025/26 Annual Budget, Council committed \$1 million for new tree plantings to help promote a clean city, create quality places and spaces, and improve the liveability for our community as we work towards increasing our canopy cover to 20 per cent by 2040.

As part of Council's partnership with the State Government for the More Trees for a Cooler West initiative, we coordinated the planting of a number

of native and introduced species, depending on location and suitability. In December, Council secured more than \$24,000 in a Healthy Cities Landcare Grant, through a Landcare Australia and Bupa partnership.

This will be used to plant 14,000 native plants in our natural areas over the next 12-month period.

Native shrubs and trees will be planted by local volunteers at National Tree Day, and by our community's many friends-of groups in Newells Paddock, Cruickshank Park and Stony Creek.

In 2025, we also engaged with our community on a number of conversations regarding how they would like to see Beevers and Bell Reserves, Footscray Park and Quarry Park all best serve the community into the future.

Council also adopted its Nature Strips Planting Policy and revised Nature Strip Planting Guidelines in October 2025, to better support residents who wish to landscape their nature strips without the need for a permit, which ensuring safety, accessibility, and consistency across the municipality.

In December, Council endorsed its Nature Plan 2025-2035, to help us strive towards positive outcomes for Maribyrnong's flora and fauna, through four key principles, that include embedding the conservation and restoration of nature into our practices and decisions.

Find out more about Community Planting Days at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events/Community-Planting-Days

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE



CREATIVE WEST: A PLACE OF CONNECTION, BELONGING AND PRIDE

MAKING A NEW HOME FOR CREATIVITY, ARTS, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY IN FOOTSCRAY



Creative West is a landmark project that will revitalise the Footscray CBD, providing a place for everyone in the community to enjoy.

It will offer welcoming indoor and outdoor green spaces for people to gather, learn new skills, attend events, and experience culture in the heart of Footscray.

Once completed, Creative West will include an upgraded Footscray Library, a performing arts venue, and a town park in central Footscray. It will bring more people to the area and help make Footscray CBD safer and more vibrant.

It has been five years since we last invited the community to share ideas for Creative West and what you'd like to see in a concept design.

Given Footscray has changed since then, we want to know if what you told us previously is still correct. We are not starting from scratch – we are confirming we are on the right track.

This part of the project has been funded by the Australian Government's urban Precincts and Partnerships Program. We received a \$5 million Australian Government Grant in 2025, and it was matched by Council to complete planning and design for Creative West.

Let's check what matters most to you before we start working on the design.

There are a few ways to get involved:

- chat to us in person or at an event
- share your thoughts online in a variety of ways at Your City Your Voice
- send us an email or call to talk to the project team

We will then share the updated concept designs for comments before we start the design process from mid-2026.

Find out more and get involved by **midnight Friday 27 February 2026** at yourcityyourvoice.com.au/cw

YOUR CITY YOUR VOICE: 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025 we welcomed an additional 331 members, taking our growing Your City Your Voice community to 5,693 users. We also had 24 conversations throughout the year, and people provided over 8,400 pieces of feedback for us to consider. If you are looking to engage with us on Council projects, make sure to subscribe to Your City Your Voice. That way you will be the first to know when new community conversations begin, and will never miss an opportunity to have your say and help shape our City. Subscribe at yourcityyourvoice.com.au



PUTTING CUSTOMERS FIRST AND KEEPING THE COMMUNITY ENGAGED

Council took big strides in 2025 to ensure residents are well supported when they need help and they can contribute to key Council projects. With the endorsement of the Council Plan 2025-29, there was a big focus on reviewing how we interact with the community.

This included commencing a review of our Community Engagement Policy – where we asked our community how they like to engage with Council – and a review of the Putting Customers First Strategy, where our community could share their recent customer service experience and ideas or improve the service.

We heard from 317 respondents who told us they preferred talking in-person at community events, markets and libraries, and they also like quick, easy ways to provide feedback online. Ideas on how to improve customer service were making the Civic Precinct front foyer warmer and friendlier, and increasing the number of full-time customer service officers to maintain service.

The next phase of engagement for the reviews will take place in the first half of 2026.

Follow yourcityyourvoice.com.au/engagement to be notified when the conversation starts again.

PHOENIX YOUTH HUB: WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU SHOW UP?

Changes are coming to Phoenix – our dedicated youth facility – and we're looking for ideas and thoughts from our community, particularly from 12-25-year-olds, to shape what is to come.

We want to know what would make Phoenix a place that you genuinely want to visit:

- events you'd turn up for
- a safe space to hang out
- support when you need it
- a great vibe
- something close to home.

Big and small ideas are welcome – it all matters. We're particularly keen to hear from those who haven't visited Phoenix before.

This is your chance to speak up before planning begins. Share your thoughts before **midnight Sunday 29 March 2026** at yourcityyourvoice.com.au/phoenix



NEW GRANTS TO ENERGISE LOCAL STREETS AND SPACES

THE LATEST ROUND OF COUNCIL'S EVENTS AND ACTIVATION GRANTS HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED, WITH A SERIES OF NEW INITIATIVES SET TO BRIGHTEN UP NEIGHBOURHOODS ACROSS THE CITY OF MARIBYRNONG IN 2026.

This round supports a diverse collection of not-for-profits, creative practitioners and local businesses through 15 grants totalling \$115,500, with each grant offering up to \$10,000 to deliver activities scheduled between February and June. Together, these projects will play a key role in strengthening the City's cultural vibrancy, night-time economy and community connection.

Among the recipients is *CineRedux: Footscray Reimagined*, a community-focused film and media project centred around the historic Trocadero Arcade and Five Walls Gallery in Footscray. The program will showcase immersive art, projections and live performances, as well as guided walking tours exploring Footscray's heritage theatres and its rich history.

Also funded was *Footscray Street Sounds*, a series of weekly pop-up street performances by award-winning multi-instrumentalist Ania Reynolds. These free, family-friendly concerts will take place at various outdoor public locations

across the Footscray CBD in March and June.

The Yarraville Twilight Sessions will bring six evenings of live music to the Yarraville Village precinct from February to June. Organised by local musician and producer Adam Coad and featuring a diverse mix of established and emerging performers, the series aims to transform public spaces and draw locals and visitors together, energising the area's nighttime economy.

In addition, a *River-Listening Symposium* will take place along the Maribyrnong River and at Pipemakers Park in early June, offering an immersive program exploring local ecology, cultural knowledge and shared listening practices.

Established under the Maribyrnong Festivals and Activation Framework 2022-26, Council's Love Your West Grants Program aims to support activations that celebrate place, foster creativity and stimulate economic activity. For further details about funded activities, please visit: maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/festivalcity/grants

ENVIRONMENT



NEVER BIN A BATTERY

OUR WASTE TRUCKS ARE TOUGH, BUT THEY'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO CATCH FIRE

In 2025, four fires broke out in kerbside waste and recycling trucks, most likely caused by lithium batteries placed in household bins. Tonnes of waste was dumped roadside to allow fire crews to safely extinguish the blazes.

These incidents put our crews and vehicles at serious risk and highlight the importance of proper battery disposal.

Batteries and e-waste can ignite when crushed in collection vehicles or at recycling facilities. A single battery in the wrong

place can spark a dangerous fire. To prevent this, never put batteries or items with cords in your household bins. Instead, take them to a designated recycling point.

By recycling batteries and electrical items at an approved drop-off hub, you not only reduce fire hazards but also help recover valuable materials for reuse. This simple step protects our workers, our community, and the environment.

To find out where to safely dispose of items with a plug, cord, or battery, visit: maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/recycling-e-waste

PARTY SMARTER WITH REUSABLE PARTY KITS



THROW A PARTY THAT THE PLANET (AND YOUR WALLET) WILL LOVE

Ease party-planning pressure – while also minimising spending and waste – by hiring a reusable party kit for your next get-together.

Braybrook Community Hub is offering bright, colourful party kits for community members that contain bowls, plates, cups, and a fork and spoon set, and the kits can accommodate 15 – 20 party guests.

This clever idea springs from local community leader Joyce Watts, who – during 2025's Plastic Free July Maribyrnong campaign – recognised the need for celebrations that don't cost the earth. By opting for reusable party products, we can save money on individual-use tableware and reduce our waste.

Enjoy this durable, dishwasher-friendly tableware made from food-safe recycled plastic for up to seven days at a time. Find out more by enquiring at Braybrook Community Hub on your next visit.

THROUGH THE LENS: VISIT COUNCIL'S NEW EXHIBITION

PLAN A VISIT TO THE ART OF OBSERVATION WITH OUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY QUIZ

The Art of Observation is a new exhibition at Council's Civic Precinct and Community Hub that celebrates Maribyrnong's photography collection. View a thought-provoking collection of works by contemporary photographers, along with documentary images by early twentieth century photographers, from 8.30am-5pm, Monday to Friday, until 8 May 2026.



Test your own observational skills on your next visit, with the quiz below. Start with the works downstairs and follow the questions to Level 1.

QUESTIONS:

1. The *F5: Footscray in Transition* project shows different photographers' versions of Footscray sites across five years. Which sweet treat is celebrated across multiple artists' works?
2. One of the photographs in *F5: Footscray in Transition* turns tagging into art by naming a photograph after somebody's graffiti scribble. What is the name of the now-infamous tagger?
3. In what other context might you see the hooks that hang up Jody Haines' *The Last Supper*?
4. Westies sure love dogs. How many dogs can you see in Simon Terrill's *Crowd Theory – Braybrook*?
5. Ah – there's a letter missing from the Footscray Park gates in Anna Kiparis' *Suburbanology* triptych. Which one?

Learn more and plan your visit at www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/TheArtofObservation

ANSWERS:

1. Donuts, 2. S Martin, 3. A butcher, 4. Two dogs, 5. The letter 'R', 6. Ammar Yonis, *Salon Går 2023*, 7. The large tree, 8. Sugar, 9. Two pairs, 10. Two workers

Image credit: Ammar Yonis, *Salon Går 2023*, 35mm film photograph on silk, 140 x 157cm



SHELF STRESS WITH WEEKLY JAZZ AND JIGSAWS

MARIBYRNONG LIBRARIES' MINDFUL PROGRAMS PRIORITISE WELLBEING

Drop into West Footscray Library on a Friday afternoon and you'll find a group of locals quietly piecing together jigsaws to the soothing sounds of soft jazz. *Jazz and Jigsaws* was introduced as a communal activity where people can enjoy mindful concentration alongside others, without any pressure to talk or perform.

MOVIE CLUB

A free screening with new film releases, indie favourites and refreshments.

Fortnightly, alternating between Footscray and West Footscray Libraries

QIGONG AND TAI CHI

Guided body movements, postures and breathing to promote health and wellbeing

Fortnightly in the Footscray Library Courtyard

These gentle programs are open to everybody and offer simple, meaningful ways to unwind and connect with the community at your own pace. Browse these events and book your free spot at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/library

INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE



DREAM BIG FOOTSCRAY

HELPING FOOTSCRAY BECOME BOLDER, BRIGHTER AND BETTER FOR EVERYONE.

Footscray is a cultural melting pot of food, creativity, essential businesses and hidden gems that attract people of all backgrounds from across Melbourne.

In recent years, growing concerns around public safety have affected how people experience Footscray and we're committed to supporting a brighter future in our City.

This includes advocacy and action like the new Salvation Army Hub in Metro West – which is now providing direct support to people with complex needs, lighting for Grand Theatre Circuit and Trugo Lane, the six-month Footscray CBD Security Program, exciting community events, a new outdoor dining setup in Nicholson Street Mall, and the recent infrastructure and artwork upgrade at Maddern Square which has become home to Reclink's new social basketball.

These projects are part of a rich tapestry of projects, plans and initiatives from bright community celebrations to practical changes that aren't flashy but make a real difference.

There is significant advocacy work to be done, and each stage requires connection and collaboration with different agencies, businesses, and individuals. Together we are transforming Footscray with everyone, for everyone.

Learn more about Footscray projects at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/FootscrayCBD

MAKING A SPLASH AT THE MAC

TWO NEW WATER SLIDES ARE COMING TO THE MARIBYRNONG AQUATIC CENTRE.

Construction has begun on two new water slides and a splash park at the MAC.

Current works include preparation for the new concrete pile footings for the splash park and water slides. These works are essential, and installation of the footings may take up to six months to complete.

The final design includes all-electric components. This means the splash park will be part of our broader transition from gas to electricity, reducing long-term costs and meeting sustainability goals.

The development is jointly funded by the State Government and Council.

The splash park and water slides are scheduled to open from mid-2027. For up-to-date information visit maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/splashpark

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES – THE FUTURE OF MELBOURNE'S WEST STARTS HERE

The revitalisation of Footscray is one of six key advocacy priorities where Council is seeking support and investment from the state and federal governments to help our city and community of Maribyrnong thrive. Watch our advocacy videos and learn more at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/advocacy



IMPROVING ACCESS TO PUBLIC TOILETS

PUBLIC TOILETS HELP EVERYONE ENJOY OUR GREAT PUBLIC SPACES.

Since adopting the Maribyrnong Public Toilet Plan 2019-2029 we have installed new toilets at Hansen Reserve, Cruickshank Park, Harris Reserve and Yarraville Gardens.

The amenities at Yarraville Gardens include an accessible toilet, all-gender ambulant toilets, a shower and our first Changing Places facility. This means people with complex support needs can spend more time in our public spaces.

Toilets at Footscray Wharf are also underway and expected to be completed later this month, plus toilets for Cranwell Reserve will be installed from May 2026.

Future toilets will continue to be explored as part of a report to Council later this year following further community feedback on the Plan last year.

Learn more and read the plan at maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/ToiletPlan

BETTER CYCLING IN MARIBYRNONG

CREATING A SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL RIDERS.

Growing evidence shows that safer and more convenient cycling infrastructure encourages more people to ride.

Projects like the newly opened West Gate Tunnel Veloway, a new shared path on Harris Street and the trial of pop-up bike paths in Footscray, Seddon and Yarraville help make it easier to move around the city, improving transport network connectivity and making active transport more accessible.

In early 2026, we will be working with the Victorian Government to make 12.7km of pop-up bike paths in Maribyrnong permanent following a report from the Department of Transport and Planning.

We have also built a new pedestrian crossing on Hyde Street to better link the new Harris Street Shared User Path to our network and we are working on a new connection along

