



# Maribyrnong's Advocacy Priorities

## 2025–28

*The future of Melbourne's west starts here*







## 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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### Future Ready Footscray

Footscray needs a coordinated reset across safety, housing, transport and local confidence. Priorities include the CBD revitalisation, delivery of the Footscray Transport Interchange, and Creative West. A clear plan is also needed to remediate and reuse the old Footscray hospital site for green space, housing and community services.



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### Mental Health and Wellbeing

Demand for mental health support is rising and local services are under strain, especially for young people. More community-based care is needed that is easier to access, including 'missing middle' services and targeted outreach. A regional approach across Melbourne's west would help align services and fill gaps.



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### Air Quality and Environmental Health

Air pollution is harming local health and needs urgent action. Stronger monitoring and transparency are needed, along with protections for communities near major transport corridors and ventilation infrastructure. Practical measures include more urban greening and canopy cover, cleaner transport choices, and freight controls to cut pollution and noise.



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### Connectivity for a Growing City

Growth in Melbourne's west is increasing congestion and pressure on local streets, public transport and safety. Investment is needed in better public transport and bus reform, plus safer crossings and targeted road upgrades. Freight impacts on key routes also need active management to reduce traffic, emissions and disruption.



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### Flood Recovery and Mitigation

Recovery from the 2022 flood is ongoing and future risk remains high. Support is needed for resilient rebuilding and home retrofits, better early warning systems, and investment in flood mitigation works. Fairer, more affordable insurance and clearer claims handling are also critical.



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### Community Infrastructure

Population growth is driving the need for more places to play, connect and access services. Key priorities include funding the Mclvor Reserve indoor sports stadium and delivering the Creative West cultural precinct. Progress is also needed to remediate and unlock the Defence Site for housing, heritage outcomes and protected open space.



# Maribyrnong – the future of Melbourne's west



## 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:

- Council Plan 2025–2029
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029
- Asset Plan 2025–2035
- Financial Plan 2025–2035
- 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  
and Wellbeing**

**Air Quality and  
Environmental  
Health**

**Connectivity  
for a Growing City**

**Flood Recovery  
and Mitigation**

**Community  
Infrastructure**

## Why invest in Maribyrnong

Maribyrnong’s population is projected to increase bby 51% from 2026 to 2051 to 155,000. 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, work 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 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.

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
- partner with other levels of government in strategic funding initiatives.



## 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

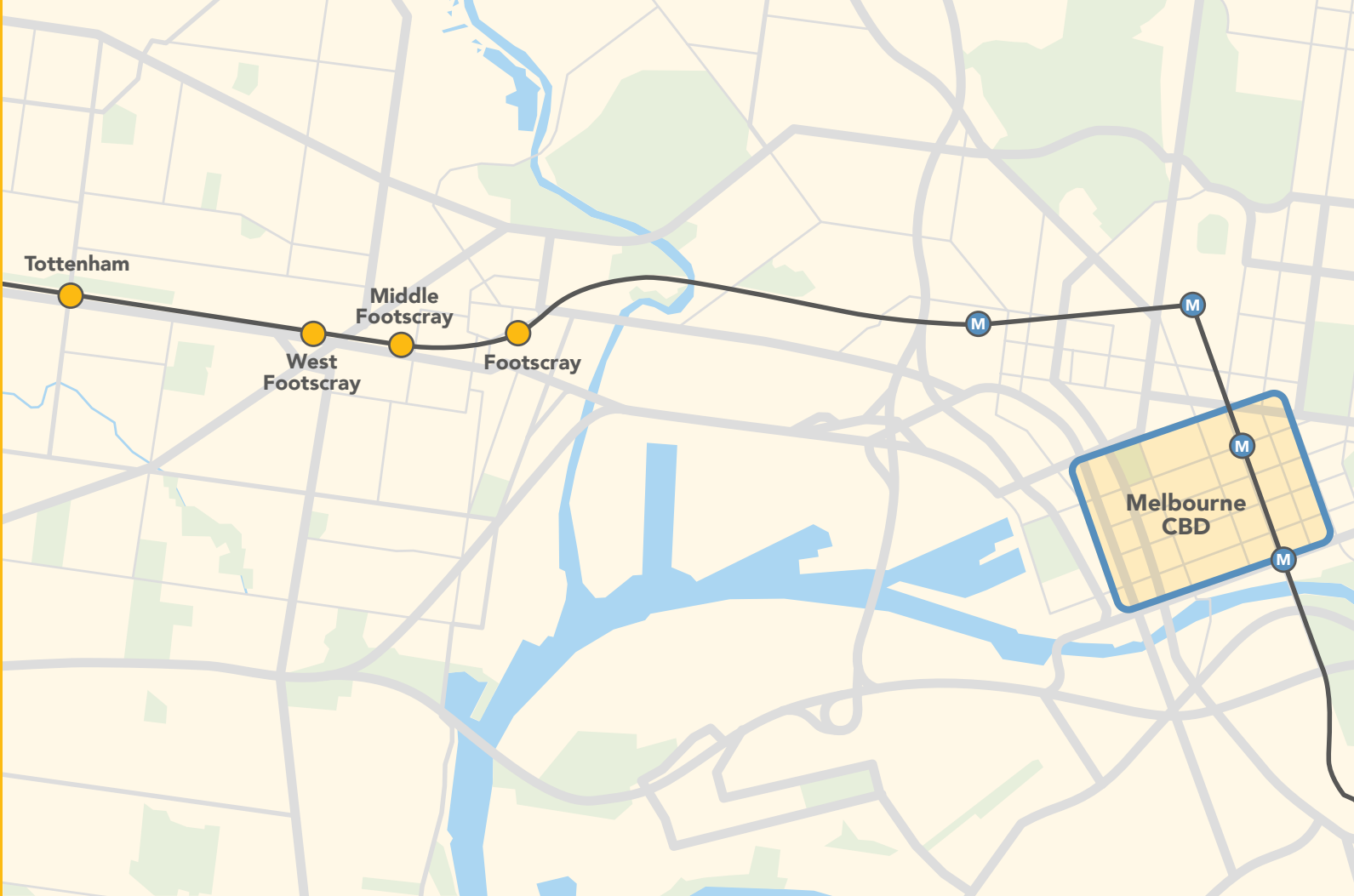
An Enterprising Region, A Vibrant Community, A Connected West, A Healthy and Resilient West and A Liveable and Sustainable West.

### M9

Community Safety, Infrastructure for Growth, and Better Transport and Connectivity.



Maribyrnong at a glance



98,812

Total population (2025)

56,976

Employed residents

51%

Population growth by 2051

55,900

Local jobs

38%

Born overseas

9,150

Local businesses

8 MINUTES

Footscray to Central Melbourne  
with the new Metro Tunnel







Our 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.

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

advocacy 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

Community Benefits



Improved safety and wellbeing



Better connectivity and access



Activated public spaces



Revitalised local economy



Inclusive urban renewal

Advocacy Asks

Asks	Intended Impact
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. This is a catalyst project that will deliver a once in a generation opportunity to cement Footscray as the creative hub of the west.
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 and Wellbeing



## Community Benefits



Improved access to support



Healthier, more resilient young people



Stronger social connections



Reduced stigma



Community wellbeing and safety



## Our 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.

### 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 Asks

Asks	Intended Impact
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 Governments 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 and Environmental Health



## Community Benefits



Improved public health



Cleaner air for all



Greener, cooler streets



Cleaner transport options



Equitable environmental outcomes

## Our Advocacy Objectives

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.



## Advocacy Asks

Asks	Intended Impact
West Gate Tunnel Ventilation Stack Air Filters	Council calls on the State 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 Governments 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 Restrictions*	Council supports the truck curfews along Williamstown Road to help reduce noise, pollution and safety risks.

\* This was achieved in December 2025.

### 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, and 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, Council 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.





# 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. As 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 from 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

## Community Benefits



Safer streets



Reduced congestion



Lower emissions



Improved access and mobility



Greater equity

## Our Advocacy Objectives

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.

## Advocacy Asks

Asks	Intended Impact
Footscray Transport Interchange	Council urges the State 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.
New and Increased Bus Services	Council asks the State Government to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• implement Infrastructure Victoria’s recommendation for a bus rapid transit route between Highpoint Maribyrnong and Tarneit, via Ashley Street and Tottenham railway station</li><li>• introduce bus reform to provide fast, frequent and direct services</li></ul>
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 Restrictions*	Council supports the truck curfews along Williamstown Road to help reduce noise, pollution and safety risks.
Western extension of Tram Network	Council calls for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a Sunshine to Highpoint high-frequency and high-capacity public transport connection</li><li>• construction of accessible tram stops along all of route 82</li><li>• plan for the extension of tram route 57 into the Maribyrnong Defence site</li></ul>

\* This was achieved in December 2025.



# Flood Recovery and 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 the State and Federal Governments to act on the outcomes of the Melbourne Water Flood Mitigation Study, and address 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
- the October 2022 flood exposed weaknesses in current emergency warning systems. Improved flood warnings enables better evacuation and response procedures and reduces panic and misinformation
- 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
- an independent report into the local economic impacts of the flood will help inform policy and strengthen advocacy for future mitigation and support programs

## Our Advocacy Objectives

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 and infrastructure



Reduced flood risk



Improved emergency warnings



Informed recovery planning



Fairer insurance outcomes

## Advocacy Asks

### Asks

Incentivise resilient rebuilding through schemes such as a GST refund on materials or delivery of a resilient retrofit program

Address the issue of insurance availability, rising premiums and improve case handling from insurance providers

State and Federal Governments invests in improvements to the Australian warning system for emergencies

Flood mitigation infrastructure, including commitment of funding the outcomes of 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

### Intended Impact

The State 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.

That the Federal Government implements:

- 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
- stronger regulations to oversee the handing of insurance claims and unreasonable premium increases
- 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

The Federal Government provides additional funding and support for research and enhancement of comprehensive Early Warning Systems for emergencies across Australia, including:

- allocate additional funding for research, development, and implementation of advanced Early Warning Systems across Australia to improve accuracy and timeliness of warnings
- 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
- 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
- consider the accessibility needs of at-risk communities in system improvements, including the culturally and linguistically diverse community
- invest in accessible public education campaigns to raise awareness about effectively responding to warnings

A commitment from the State 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.

The State 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



## Community Benefits



Economic investment and growth



Long-term impact



Enhanced wellbeing and health



Social engagement and inclusion



Increased housing supply and affordability



Artist's impression

## Our Advocacy Objectives

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.

### 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 Asks

Asks	Intended Impact
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 Governments, 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.



## More information

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