

Council acknowledges we are on traditional lands of the Kulin Nation and offer our respects to the Elders of these traditional lands, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and emerging.

- 1 Background
- 2 Purpose
- 2 A Place-based approach
- 3 Context
- 3 First Nations Peoples
- 3 Scope
- 3 Vision
- 4 Objectives
- 4 Roles and Responsibilities
- 6 Theme 1 Bring the best to the West
- 7 Theme 2 Celebrate the night
- 8 Theme 3 A place-based lens
- 9 Theme 4 Embrace the river corridor
- 10 Principles for Delivery
- 12 Implementation
- 14 Funding Eligibility and Criteria
- 16 Festivals and Visitation Advisory Panel
- 16 Review and Evaluation
- 16 Related documents

BACKGROUND



"more, smaller, better – lighter, quicker, cheaper"

In 2010 Council launched a major initiative known as 'Festival City' to increase the City's vibrancy and prosperity. At this time Council also formally adopted the Maribyrnong Festivals Policy and Strategy Plan 2010-2013, identifying Council's vision to be recognised as an iconic festival city and to underpin and guide the new initiative. The Policy and Strategy Plan was reviewed and updated in 2013, and again in 2017, and has since been formally been known as Council's Festival City Policy. Whilst the Festival City initiative has been regarded as successful in supporting a strong and vibrant festivals program, the City's current period of rapid growth and change, coupled with the transformative social impacts of COVID-19, has prompted new thinking around City attraction initiatives.

In 2020 Council's independent Festival Advisory Panel recommended a review of the Policy, which was noted by Council at the December 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting. Consultation with community and industry stakeholders in 2021 and 2022 has indicated a strong desire for Council to support authentic and local contemporary experiences for our community to enjoy.

This perspective is underscored by the City's popular outdoor dining and activation program, the 'Love Your Local' trader campaign and public realm improvements such as 'pop up' parks.

At the heart of this Framework is a commitment to a 'place-based approach' given the wideranging benefits it can bring to communities, the local economy and City identity. Council recognises when people love a place it adds enormous social and economic value to a community, an outcome core to the role of local government.

The strength of our City's night time economy, and how we best capitalise on the trend of visitors dispersing to inner-city areas (other than Melbourne's CBD), also informs much of the rationale of this document.

"Activations need to be specific to the local community to meet its needs, and locals have the opportunity to connect with one another."

LOCAL RESIDENT



PURPOSE

This Framework explains why Council invests in a dynamic range of festivals, events, activations and other place-based activities. Council acknowledges that a lively mix of attractions will:

- Contribute to the liveability of the City by activating public spaces in new and creative ways which promote distinct precinct identities and creates local pride.
- Enhance street life offerings and walkability to make the City feel safer and more connected.
- Create better first impressions of our City to attract new visitors and extend stays.
- Build community harmony and restore community connection.
- Develop understanding, appreciation and greater engagement with our diverse cultures.
- Drive continued economic growth and investment in the City's commercial activity centres.

A PLACE-BASED APPROACH

For the purpose of this Framework, a place-based approach:

- Is based around shared outcomes that reflect locally agreed priorities and unite local stakeholders.
- Is a shared understanding of local context drawing on a broad range of evidence, from data to research to lived experience and local knowledge.
- Is an incremental method of improving a location over a long period of time through many separate small projects or activities.
- Is about being more creative in the way we treat and interact with our public spaces in order to create a community that is more inviting, more interesting, more stimulating, more comfortable, more vibrant and more fun.
- Inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces.
- Facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

A PLACE-BASED APPROACH IS	A PLACE-BASED APPROACH IS NOT
Community-driven	Top-down
Visionary	Reactionary
Function before form	Design-driven
Adaptable	A blanket solution or quick fix
Inclusive	Exclusionary
Focused on creating destinations	Car-centric
Context-specific	One-size-fits-all
Dynamic	Static
Trans-disciplinary	Discipline-driven
Transformative	One-dimensional
Flexible	Dependent on regulatory controls
Collaborative	A cost/benefit analysis
Sociable	Project-focused

CONTEXT

This Framework contributes to Council's strategic objectives contained in the Council Plan 2021-2025, by considering:

OBJECTIVE 2: LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Council will partner with its community to provide and advocate for integrated built and natural environments with access to open spaces that are well maintained, engaging, accessible and respectful of the community and neighbourhoods.

OBJECTIVE 3: A PLACE FOR ALL

Council will provide well-planned neighbourhoods and a strong local economy, delivering services that are inclusive and accessible to the whole community, and that support wellbeing, healthy and safe living, connection to the community, and cultural interaction.

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

Council acknowledges the deep and enduring relationship First Nations peoples have with the land, and recognises them as the City's original placemakers. Council is committed to working in partnership with First Nations Peoples and will ensure Traditional Owners are consulted with and given opportunities to contribute to its placebased initiatives.

SCOPE

Maribyrnong's activation initiatives include: festivals, events, and temporal interventions in the public realm.

Council takes the view that in most instances communities are best placed to produce the ideas and to plan, organise and deliver activations such as events and festivals and that the role of Council should be one of providing support. However, from time to time Council will pilot new place-based initiatives as a template for community to follow. Council also has a role to partner with key organisations to produce or leverage from other major events and initiatives to enhance the City's offerings and encourage cultural tourism.

Collaboration across Council, with organisers and the community, will be pivotal to the successful delivery of the Framework objectives.

VISION

The City of Maribyrnong will become known as Melbourne's 'go to' destination for compelling food, hospitality, music and entertainment offerings distinct from anywhere in Australia.

Its unique precincts and vibrant neighbourhoods will showcase the City's diverse, creative and entrepreneurial community, surprising and delighting visitors, especially during after work hours.

Through this Framework, Council hopes that Maribyrnong's reputation for creativity and a dynamic and diverse culture, will be significantly enhanced ensuring our City becomes an integral part of the 'Melbourne Experience' for visitors.

OBJECTIVES

Through embedding the principles of a place-based approach this Framework aims to:

- Leverage from Council's successful festival support model to include a broader range of scalable, contemporary and more regular urban experiences and attractions.
- Influence improved delivery of current and new community festivals, activations and events in regard to their inclusivity, sustainability, economic and environmental impact, and relationship to place.
- Increase local community buy-in of our distinct cultural precincts and leverage these precincts to improve visitability of our City.
- Make our streets more activated, cohesive, enticing and safe creating better 'first impressions'.
- Increase walkability of our City in alignment with our climate emergency objectives.
- Support the growth of our night time economy and make it our key point of difference.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Maribyrnong City Council has many different roles and responsibilities in the planning and delivery of the City's activation initiatives. Many other organisations are also involved in delivering these initiatives. To position Maribyrnong as an integral part of the 'Melbourne Experience' all organisations must work together.

Council supports festivals, events, activations and other place-based initiatives in the form of:

- Providing grants for community-led events, festivals and activations.
- Producing, attracting and delivering activities that meet the objectives of this Framework and Council priorities.
- Securing co-producing arrangements with major Melbourne festivals and events for content delivery within the City of Maribyrnong.
- Providing professional development opportunities and mentoring to community organisers.
- Supporting the community to navigate any required Council permits and regulatory requirements.
- Providing free or subsidised venues and public spaces for place-based opportunities.
- Facilitating and providing access to Council resources, as appropriate.
- Brokerage of new commercial and strategic partnerships which support investment in new place-based initiatives.
- Monitoring permits, licences and regulatory compliance.
- Design and implementation of pop up parks, outdoor dining, and public realm upgrades.
- Marketing and promotion.

"The City's small bars, night cafés and restaurants are growing at pace, especially in Footscray. It would be great if there were ways Council could help support small operators to grow the night time offerings."

LOCAL BUSINESS OWNER



THEMES

1 BRING THE BEST TO THE WEST

RATIONALE

Visit Victoria's major events strategy has proven that major events done well can boost a city's identity and economy and spread life and colour through its community. More recently, smaller cities and regional LGAs have also leveraged major events to grow their cities identity and provide a compelling reason to visit - often in low tourist seasons e.g. Hobart's Dark Mofo.

Through the strategic targeting of signature festivals, attractions and commercial event properties, the City Maribyrnong can increase its profile and provide a pull factor to local, interstate and international visitors.

PRINCIPLE 1

Council to develop Maribyrnong as the best choice for promoters of high quality boutique commercial events and festivals which help stimulate both the City's day and night time economies.

ACTIONS:

 Identify 3-4 strategic greenfield and/or brownfield Council owned sites to promote as destinations for major events.

- Develop event hosting capability of identified venue spaces i.e. adequate lighting, power, water and toilet infrastructure.
- Determine an event cap in each of the identified locations which aligns with community expectations and EPA regulations.
- Develop information packs that provide interested parties with accurate information regarding compliance and permission, fees and charges, available support and Council strategic priorities.
- Develop a list of key commercial events in the marketplace that align with the City's values and prepare a bid document for their staging in Maribyrnong.
- Continue to partner with key organisations and leverage from other major festivals and events such as Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, Midsumma, Melbourne Fringe and Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

CELEBRATE THE NIGHT RATIONALE · Identify a single venue, streetscape or defined area within one of the City's commercial In the last decade many 'industrial' cities have centres to trial as a 'special entertainment transitioned to after-hours hospitality and precinct'. entertainment districts in order to revitalise their local economy. The most successful of these Develop a Live Music Action Plan with an have had a confluence of spatial characteristics emphasis on growing live performance which support night time activation: creative opportunities during after work hours. and entrepreneurial communities, interesting

of Maribyrnong.

PRINCIPLE 2

Council to position Maribyrnong as a premier night time destination with an emphasis on the City's key designated priority precincts and gateway suburbs.

built forms, diverse food and drink options

and proximity to the CBD. They're also well

connected by public transport, with walkable 'fine grain' street networks, high density housing

and a clearly defined city grid. Most of these

characteristics can currently be found in the City

ACTIONS

 Implement new night time diversification grants for local business and NFPs to promote after work hours offerings in commercial centres.

- Broaden the scope of Council's Business Improvement Grants to include lighting of shop fronts and facades in key commercial zones.
- Seek State Government funding to progress the actions of Council's Footscray at Night Lighting Strategy.
- Research premier night time tourism products (events/festivals) and prepare commercial bids to bring them to City of Maribyrnong.
- Form a night time advisory panel chaired by Council consisting of local night time business owners entrepreneurs, promoters and landlords to advise Council on key actions to support the night time economy.

"I would like to see Council invest more in regular waves of impact than the short burst of a festival."

LOCAL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER



3 A PLACE-BASED LENS

RATIONALE

Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, a place-based approach can shape our public realm in order to maximise shared value.

PRINCIPLE 3

Council will embed the principles of a placebased approach in the design, facilitation and implementation of the city's events, festivals, and activations.

ACTIONS

- Implement an 'Annual' and 'Quick Response' grants stream which supports creative placebased initiatives, with a focus on activity centres, City gateways and visitor arrival points.
- Continue Council's support of signature community and partner producer festivals with improved alignment to place-based principles.
- Engage and influence landlords and land use managers (e.g. Vic Track, Parks Victoria, Metro Trains) to permit 'meanwhile or 'meantime use' at strategic sites for the City.

"It would be great to see things happen in the places and spaces that usually lie dormant."

LOCAL RESIDENT



4 EMBRACE OUR RIVER

RATIONALE

Historically, most inner city waterfronts have been a clutter of shipping terminals, warehouses and inner-city tenements with poor presentation and connection to the commercial heart of a city. More recently, cities from Liverpool to Hong Kong, Chicago to Vancouver, Darwin to Perth have invested in the revitalisation of these tired districts with an aim to make them integral to the city's identity and local economy. The new Footscray Wharf is the latest deliverable of Council's landmark Footscray River Edge Master Plan advancing the revitalisation of our City. To properly realise Council's vision for the river's edge, and complete the City's post-industrial transformation, a plan for a major river front activation needs to be conceptualised.

PRINCIPLE 4

Council to develop a five year plan for the delivery of a major waterfront event that celebrates the Maribyrnong River including the new Footscray Wharf.

ACTIONS

- Research (and where feasible) visit and benchmark major water front events and festivals in Australia.
- · Undertake feasibility studies including:
 - workshopping of key themes
 - site studies and initial stocktake of infrastructure requirements
 - consider naming and branding options
- Speak with major river front and tourism stakeholders: Parks Victoria, Visit Victoria, DELWP, and key Maribyrnong water users to develop a proof of concept.
- Connect with business and industry e.g. waterfront developers and undertake a market sounding to test potential interest.
- Reinvest commercial event fee contributions into the development of a major waterfront event/attraction.
- Trial a pilot event to demonstrate feasibility and stimulate further creative and financial partnerships.

PRINCIPLES FOR DELIVERY

Council will role-model excellent standards of planning and delivery and will encourage and assist organisers to use best practice principles set out below.

PLANNING

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- Establish clear objectives for new initiatives, understanding who they are for, how they will be implemented and evaluated.
- Identify any planning restrictions that apply to the activities location/s or venue/s.
- Be aware of the City-wide calendar of events when deciding when and where to stage a new initiative.
- Where relevant, develop a sustainability plan that outlines how the initiative may continue successfully in the future, and identify options to improve financial viability.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Engage with local communities, businesses and residents when planning initiatives to identify opportunities and any issues that may arise.
- Identify key stakeholders (resident or business) who could work together to make delivery as smooth as possible, particularly in regard to traffic disruption, noise and parking.
- Promote and market activities through effective communication channels to reach both mainstream and minority sectors of the community locally and more broadly.

RISK

- Plan for the safety of people attending activities including completing risk assessments, safety and emergency management plans and COVIDsafe plans.
- Provide for the responsible serving of alcohol to minimise any alcohol related matters during and post events.

• Ensure compliance with relevant statutory legislation, permits and licences

ACCESSIBILITY

- Take into account how ALL people will access and engage with initiatives.
- Provide adequate provision for people with a disability or limited mobility e.g. parking, toilets, stage viewing areas.
- Ensure those who are visually impaired, have sensory sensitivities or may have difficulty hearing are considered during the planning of initiatives.
- Consider different ways of communicating with the community e.g. using plain English, translations where necessary, use of pictures, radio or large font size.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Ensure festivals and activations are in alignment with Council's Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2025.
- Ensure appropriate waste and environmental sustainability management plans are in place for all activities.
- Ensure activities minimise waste and associated emissions through careful procurement, eliminating single use plastics, separating recycling and waste buying local/low emissions food and produce.
- Consider the use of composting food waste for a local community garden.
- Identify how to minimise effects of noise to residents and businesses near the place with activities.
- Minimise the impact on local flora and fauna or sensitive ecological environments.
- Encourage the use of public transport, walking or cycling to/from activities.

"There are so many bedroom producers in this city making music, Council needs to develop more local performance opportunities for them."

LOCAL RESIDENT



IMPLEMENTATION

To complement the established Festival City funding models (1 and 2), three new grants streams (3, 4 and 5) have been developed in response to the community's desire to pilot authentic, local and more contemporary experiences – especially during after work hours. These new 'Love Your West' Grants streams will include support of more agile activations delivered in shorter time frames.





1 PARTNER / PRODUCER FESTIVALS

Partner/Producer festivals build relationships between communities in the City of Maribyrnong, commercial festival operators and festivals that are delivered in Melbourne or Australia wide.

PARTNER/PRODUCER FESTIVALS:

- Bring positive impacts of Australia's world-class festivals to Maribyrnong communities.
- Build audiences, attract cultural tourists, and increase entertainment and other activity in the City.
- Foster economic prosperity of the City.

- · Seek to provide legacy benefits.
- Activate our public spaces in innovative ways and utilise our commercial venues.
- Council will partner with festival and/or produce festival acitvities where it identifies the festival will advance the City of Maribyrnong.

2 SIGNATURE FESTIVALS

Signature festivals showcase the best of the City of Maribyrnong, its geography, local cultures or creative talents and attract audiences across Melbourne and Victoria.

FUNDED SIGNATURE FESTIVALS:

- Tend to be larger scale festivals, attracting audiences in excess of 5,000 people.
- Encourage cultural tourism and strong economic activity.
- Help position Maribyrnong as an events destination.
- Attract state-wide media and public attention and have positive flow-on effects for our businesses and communities.

- Provide paid opportunities for local cultural and creative sectors.
- · Create opportunities for local capacity building.
- Funding is available for not-for-profit associations.
- Applications are assessed by Council's Festivals and Visitation Advisory Panel who make funding recommendations to Council for endorsement.
- Funds awarded on a biennial basis.

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3 PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES (ANNUAL)

This stream is for place-based activities that creatively activate public spaces, business precincts and local neighbourhoods.

FUNDED PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES (ANNUAL):

- Tend to be small to medium scale activities, attracting audiences of 500-5,000 people.
- Help strengthen local precinct and neighbourhood identity.
- Provide opportunity for inclusive local participation.
- Increase visitation and spending in local area.
- Provide paid opportunities for local cultural and creative sectors.

- Promote collaborations between local business and creatives
- Funding is available for not-for-profit associations.
- Applications are assessed by Council's Festivals and Visitation Advisory Panel who make funding recommendations to Council for endorsement.
- Funds awarded on an annual basis.

4 PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES (QUICK RESPONSE)

This stream has been informed by the success of Council's Love Your Local Activation Grants in 2021 which (as we emerged from COVID-19 lockdowns) supported a number of smaller scale activities to be produced and delivered in short timeframes within our key centres. The quick response allows for activities that cannot the meet fixed annual timeframes and may include events in response to unexpected issues/responses to a disaster requiring urgent commitment to meet State or Federal Government timelines.

FUNDED PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES (QUICK RESPONSE):

- Tend to be small-to-medium scale activities, attracting audiences of 100-2,000.
- May be presented on an ad-hoc or semiregular basis.
- · May be a pilot concept requiring seed funding.
- Help strengthen local precinct and neighbourhood identity.
- Provide opportunity for inclusive local participation.

- Increase visitation and spending in local area.
- Provide paid opportunities for local cultural and creative sectors.
- Funding is available to not-for-profit or forprofit enterprises.
- Applications will be assessed by a panel of Council officers and endorsed by the relevant Manager/Director.
- Outcomes will be advised within 28 days of applications being received.

5 NIGHT TIME DIVERSIFICATION

This stream is designed for activities will enhance or widen the reach of our City's night time attractions and help build Maribyrnong's reputation as a night time destination of choice.

FUNDED NIGHT TIME DIVERSIFICATION INITIATIVES:

- Will help strengthen the night time identity of individual precincts or neighbourhood.
- Will enhance a sense of safety in the City's activity centres.
- Will encourage audience development for existing or new night time offerings.
- Funding is available to not-for-profit or forprofit enterprises.
- Applications will be assessed by a panel of Council officers and endorsed by the relevant Manager/Director.
- Outcomes will be advised within 28 days of applications being received.

FUNDING ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

The following eligibility and criteria will apply to apply to activities funded through Festival City and Love Your West Grants Programs. The criteria also guides Council in making decisions with regard to partnering or producing festivals and events.





	FESTIVAL CITY PROGRAMS		LOVE YOUR WEST GRANTS			
ELIGIBILITY*	Partner Producer Festivals	Signature Festivals Grant Stream	Activation (Annual) Grant Stream	Activation (Quick Response) Grant Stream	Night Time Diversification Grant Stream	
Applicant is a not-for-profit incorporated association (or is Auspiced by an incorporated body)	V	V	V	V	√	
Applicant may be a for-profit business or sole trader registered within City of Maribyrnong	V			V	√	
Activity must occur within City of Maribyrnong	√	√	√	√	1	
Activity is free to attend or includes significant free programming	√	√	√	√		
Applicant must have acquitted all previous Council grants and have no outstanding debts to Maribyrnong City Council	√	√	√	√	√	
Applicant must hold Public Liability Insurance to value of \$20 million (minimum)	√	V	V	V	√	

^{*} Additional eligibility criteria may be itemised in the Guidelines for each of the funding streams.

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^{*} Entities that already receive operational funding from Council are ineligible to apply for a Festival City or Love Your West Grant.

^{*} Projects already funded by Council are ineligible for a Festival City or Love Your West Grant.

	FESTIVAL CITY PROGRAMS		LOVE YOUR WEST GRANTS			
CRITERIA	Partner Producer Festivals	Signature Festivals Grant Stream	Activation (Annual) Grant Stream	Activation (Quick Response) Grant Stream	Night Time Diversification Grant Stream	
Commitment to a professional and safe approach in planning and delivery in consultation with Council	√	√	√	√	√	
Evidence of local need and/or community support for the activity	√	√	√	√	✓	
Demonstrates relevant and engaging content or delivery	√	√	√	√	√	
Evidence of direct benefit to local businesses, cultural and creative industries &/or artists	V	V	V	V	√	
Strengthen local precinct and neighbourhood identity	√	√	✓	✓	✓	
Provide opportunities for local participation and capacity building	√	√	√	√		
Includes activities or initiatives that will further Maribyrnong's reputation as a night time destination of choice					√	
Includes measures to promote gender equity, inclusion and accessibility in the planning and delivery	√	√	V	√	V	
Commitment to good environmental sustainability practices and minimising environmental impact	V	V	V	V	V	
Evidence of a realistic budget with appropriate resourcing	√	√	√	√	√	

PREFERENCE MAY BE GIVEN TO ACTIVITIES THAT:

- · are First Nations led
- are developed in partnership with CALD communities, LGBTIQA+ people, young people, older people and/or people living with disability
- involve community groups within the City of Maribyrnong that are underrepresented in the City's annual events program
- align with key objectives of Council's Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2025
- address a geographic gap to enable a fair distribution of activity across the Municipality
- are staged in the (typically quieter) winter months to help ensure a balanced calendar of activities across the year

- activate underutilised space in either the public or private realm
- imaginatively utilise public locations that help showcase Maribyrnong's assets
- are staged in the City's key activity centres and will increase economic activity to businesses, helping support COVID-19 economic recovery
- include programming that addresses Council's aim to stimulate cultural interaction and connection to the community



FESTIVALS AND VISITATION ADVISORY PANEL

Maribyrnong City Council has an independent Advisory Panel (Panel) to provide Council with strategic advice and recommendations pertaining to its festivals and visitation initiatives. This includes assessing and providing recommendations to Council in relation to festival grants and funding programs, and providing strategic advice on the development of related policies. The Panel has influenced the design of the Festival City and Love Your West Grants Programs outlined in this Framework and will be supported to ensure it can continue to provide ongoing independent and leading industry advice and recommendations to Council.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

There is a need to continually evaluate the Festivals and Activation Framework 2022-2026 to ensure it makes a real difference to the City of Maribyrnong.

The Framework's success in meeting its vision will be measured in several ways:

- · Scope and balance of the Program.
- · Locations and dates of activations.

- · Scale and Popularity of activations.
- · Corporate funding and other contributions.
- Spend map and pedestrian count data comparisons year on year.

And subjective or anecdotal measures, such as feedback, media coverage and public comment.

This Framework will be reviewed five years from the date of approval, or whenever Council determines the need.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Maribyrnong 2040 Community Plan
- Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2023
- Maribyrnong River Edge Masterplan
- Maribyrnong Open Space Strategy
- Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2025
- Footscray at Night Lighting Strategy 2011



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