

# AGENDA



Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 25 August 2025 at 7:00 PM

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting

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Bruce Dobson

Chief Executive Officer

1      Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

2      Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

3      Confirmation Of Minutes

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Council held on Monday 28 July 2025

4      Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

5      Reports By Councillors



## 6 Planning Matters

### 6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 July 2025 to 31 July 2025

**Final Report Destination:** Council  
**Paper Type:** For Noting  
**Author:** Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie  
**Manager:** Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie  
**Executive:** Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

#### SUMMARY

Details of planning applications considered under delegation are referred for information. It is recommended that the items be noted.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 July 2025 to 31 July 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

#### 1. REPORT

Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 1 July 2025 to 31 July 2025 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type	No.
Building & Works: Residential	2
Other	4
Subdivision	8
Units	4
Tree Removal / Pruning	10
Single Dwelling	3
Change of Use	3
Telecommunications Facility	1
Child Care Centre	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>

#### 2. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Nil

## Knox City Council

### Report of Planning Applications Decided under Delegation

1 July 2025 and 31 July 2025

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2025/9076	337 Scoresby Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two (2) lot subdivision (approved development site)	11/07/2025 Approved
Baird	2024/6293	20 Commercial Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of one (1) Double Storey Dwelling and one (1) Single Storey Dwelling to the rear of the Existing Dwelling	18/07/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6086	8/841 Mountain Highway BAYSWATER VIC 3153	The use of the land for the purpose of a 'restricted recreation facility' and the display of internally illuminated business identification signage	9/07/2025 Approved
Baird	2025/6284	3/38 Corporate Boulevard BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Buildings and works to existing warehouse (including walls to ground floor entry/reception & additions to mezzanine office)	4/07/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/9068	11 Army Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Quercus palustris (Pin Oak)	9/07/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6225	53 Miller Road THE BASIN VIC 3154	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus obliqua (Messmate)	10/07/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6233	11 Shalimar Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of five (5) Cupressus × leylandii (Leyland Cypress), two (2) Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson's Cypress) and one (1) Hesperocyparis lusitanica (Mexican Cypress)	30/07/2025 Approved
Chandler	2025/6198	13 Hayles Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and Works (construction of a garage and removal of one (1) tree)	25/07/2025 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Chandler	2025/6222	7 Parker Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of one (1) <i>Lagunaria patersonia</i> (Norfolk Island hibiscus), one (1) <i>Cupressus</i> sp (Stump) and one (1) <i>Pittosporum eugenioides</i> 'Variegatum' (Variegated Pittosporum)	9/07/2025 Approved
Chandler	2024/6373	8B Floriston Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Use land for a Child Care Centre, associated buildings and works and removal of vegetation	25/07/2025 Notice of Decision
Collier	2025/9074	39 Alderford Drive WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Two lot subdivision (approved development site)	10/07/2025 Approved
Collier	2025/6269	15A Mint Street WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Two Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	3/07/2025 Approved
Collier	2024/9095	471 Mountain Highway BAYSWATER VIC 3153	The construction of shade structures over existing car parks	17/07/2025 Approved
Collier	2024/6208	Templeton Reserve 51 Templeton Street WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Development of a telecommunications facility comprising a 35 metre monopole, associated antennas, associated equipment and flood lighting and vegetation removal	23/07/2025 Notice of Decision
Collier	2025/6215	11 Harmsworth Avenue WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) <i>Acacia dealbata</i> (Silver Wattle)	2/07/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6118	3 Rodney Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of 3 single storey residential dwellings on an allotment on behalf of Homes Victoria pursuant to Clause 53.20 of the planning scheme	30/07/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6259	1/65 Coleman Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Four Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	25/07/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6562	85 Lewis Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Development of the land for four (4) warehouses and reduction in the car parking requirements	14/07/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2024/6595	9 Orchard Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of Five (5) Double Storey Dwellings on a lot and a reduction in the visitor car parking requirements	24/07/2025 Notice of Decision

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dinsdale	2025/6219	26 Margaret Avenue BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Three lot subdivision (approved development site)	4/07/2025 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6224	14 Queenstown Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Acacia melanoxylon (Blackwood)	9/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2024/6476	8 Dorset Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of existing dwelling, alterations to the existing dwelling, removal of vegetation and alteration of access to a road in Transport Zone 2	18/07/2025 Refused
Dobson	2024/6521	6 Langley Court LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Use and development of a double storey dwelling	1/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/9075	14 Seascape Close FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (construction of a storeroom to the front of the existing dwelling)	3/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6025	2 Carrington Court LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Use and Development of a double storey dwelling, including earthworks, a front fence exceeding 1.2m in height, a private tennis court and construction outside the building envelope	4/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6220	21 Allora Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus bicostata (Southern Blue Gum)	9/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6232	35 Alexander Crescent FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Liquidambar styraciflua (Sweetgum)	31/07/2025 Approved
Dobson	2025/6232	31 Trafalgar Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Lopping of one (1) Grevillea robusta (Silky Oak)	30/07/2025 Approved
Friberg	2025/6124	1632 Ferntree Gully Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Change of use for car sales and associated buildings and works including new carwash and detailing bays	15/07/2025 Approved
Friberg	2025/9077	5 Ferguson Court FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus nicholii (Narrow leaved Black Peppermint)	22/07/2025 Approved

<b>Ward</b>	<b>No/ Type</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Scott	2025/9078	St Mary's College 10A Riddell Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Building and works as part of the refurbishment of an existing education building, including the demolition and reconstruction of sections of external facades and a minor increase in floor area of approximately 13sqm.	15/07/2025 Approved
Scott	2025/9083	12 Tyner Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	2 lot subdivision (approved development site)	30/07/2025 Approved
Taylor	2025/6251	90 Major Crescent LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Development of the land for a single storey dwelling	23/07/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6064	75/1470 Ferntree Gully Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Use of the Land for Motor Vehicle Sales	10/07/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6290	32 Denver Crescent ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Two (2) lot subdivision (approved development site)	9/07/2025 Approved
Tirhatuan	2025/6296	18 Hillview Avenue ROWVILLE VIC 3178	2 Lot Subdivision (approved development site)	18/07/2025 Approved

## 6.2 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Principal Planner, Francis Wong
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
<b>Executive:</b>	Director City Liveability, Matt Kelleher

### SUMMARY

This report considers the Planning Application P/2023/6476 for the construction of 23 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

### RECOMMENDATION (SUMMARY)

That Council authorise officers to negotiate a settlement with the parties at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in Application for Review P459/2025 to issue a Planning Permit for the construction of 23 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna subject to the conditions detailed in the full recommendation in section 10 below.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Planning Application P/2023/6476 proposed the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna. The application received 246 objections and was considered by Council at its meeting on 28 April 2025, where it was determined to refuse the application. The applicant subsequently lodged an appeal at VCAT against the refusal of the application.

A compulsory conference was held at VCAT on 22 July 2025, which was attended by three objectors (who represented numerous other objectors), the applicant, and the Council Planning Officer. A further compulsory conference was held at VCAT on 31 July 2025. At the compulsory conferences, an agreement was reached between all parties that 'without prejudice' plans showing the number of dwellings reduced by one (1) to 23 dwellings and amended permit conditions to require additional screening to windows and modifications to the bin storage area were acceptable subject to further consideration by Council.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Council Planning Officer's assessment of the 'without prejudice' proposal to assist in forming a position on the application. It should be read in conjunction with the attachments.

### 2. DISCUSSION

The original proposal was for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

A compulsory conference was held at VCAT on 22 July 2025, which was attended by three objectors (who represented numerous other objectors), the applicant, and the Council planning officer. During the initial compulsory conference, all parties agreed to the following three outcomes:

- (a) modifications to the plans that would combine two of the proposed dwellings into one dwelling;
- (b) the south facing windows on the first floor of proposed Dwellings TH1 to TH6 would be appropriately screened (to be included on the draft conditions submitted by Council); and
- (c) expert opinions would be sought from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Council and the applicant regarding the safety of Wantirna Road if the proposed Bellbird Drive access were to be removed.

A subsequent compulsory conference was held on 31 July 2025. An agreement was reached between all parties that:

- (a) the 'without prejudice' plans showing Dwellings TH6 and TH7 combined into one dwelling was generally accepted (essentially making Dwelling TH6 slightly wider but reduced from three-storey to two-storey built form, and deleting Dwelling TH7 altogether), and subject to a condition for the bin storage area and hard waste area to be swapped around due to the wider space now available next to Dwelling TH6 to accommodate the turning movements of rubbish trucks;
- (b) the updated draft conditions submitted by Council were accepted; and
- (c) it was accepted that all expert opinions advised safety risk would be increased on Wantirna Road if the Bellbird Drive access were to be removed and that therefore, the Bellbird Drive access must be retained.

It is considered that subject to permit conditions, the proposed development will provide a balance between the need for additional housing within the appropriate residential zone, whilst also ensuring the amenity of surrounding properties is not compromised.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

The original application was advertised twice, each time by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers. During the second advertising period notices were also sent to the current objectors. In total 246 objections were received. The main issues raised related to traffic congestion, car parking, landscaping, overlooking, neighbourhood character, waste bin location, drainage, and amenity impacts.

VCAT held compulsory conferences on 22 and 31 July 2025, which were both attended by three objectors, the applicant, and the Council planning officer.

The original application was referred to the Department of Transport and internal departments for advice. The initial referrals are still relevant, however internal advice was sought from Council's Traffic Engineer to provide their expert opinion to VCAT with regards to the Bellbird Drive access, and whether the relocation of the bin storage area would affect the turning circles of rubbish trucks. Advice was also sought from Council's Arborist/Landscape Officer on their expert opinion regarding the modified draft conditions in relation to landscaping. Council's advice provided to VCAT was that removal of the Bellbird Drive access would increase the risk on Wantirna Road. No major concerns were raised regarding the relocation of the bin storage area nor the changes to the modified draft conditions.

### **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant social implications associated with the proposed development. A thorough assessment of the application against all relevant considerations of the Knox Planning Scheme can be found in the Officer's Report at Attachment 1.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

In response to the Community Net Zero 2040 target and exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation, the Knox Planning Scheme does not currently require planning applications to achieve net zero emissions, nor has this proposal been required to achieve this.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant environmental impacts or amenity issues associated with the proposed development. A thorough assessment of the application against environmental and amenity considerations can be found in the Officer's Report at Attachment 1.

### **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial or economic implications associated with the proposed development for Council.

### **7. RISKS**

There are no major risks to Council associated with the proposal.

### **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

#### **Planning our future city**

Strategy 6.1 - There is improved access to a diverse range of housing options through effective planning, advocacy, and identifying opportunities for social and affordable housing supply.

Strategy 6.2 - High quality, integrated community services and facilities are available through the planning, design and maintenance of multifunctional places that promote connection and utilisation.

Strategy 6.3 - Our evolving neighbourhoods are liveable and sustainable through planning and design that responds to population growth and our community's changing needs.

Strategy 6.4 Our community's expectations and aspirations for housing development and land use are considered through planning, advocacy, partnerships and decision-making.

### **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

### **10. RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Council authorise officers to negotiate a settlement with the parties to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) Application for Review P459/2025 on the basis that the issue of a Planning Permit by VCAT for the construction of 23 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna be subject to the following conditions:**



### **Amended Development Plans**

1. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, amended development plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The development plans must be approved prior to other plans required by this permit. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions. The plans must be generally in accordance with the plans submitted with the application but modified to show:
  - 1.1 Rainwater tanks for TH18 to TH23 inclusive to be relocated to the rear (adjacent to the rear tandem car spaces; but not to be shown on the plans as per Condition 1.13 of this Planning Permit), with the resulting empty nook to be used as the entry porch for the relocated front entry door, and the front window to be widened at least to the extent of the previous location of the front entry door, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Responsible Authority.
  - 1.2 Balcony area measurements to be updated to match their respective dimensions.
  - 1.3 Elevation cardinal directions corrected on Sheet Nos. TPA12 and TPA13.
  - 1.4 The following modifications so that they do not encroach into the garage parking spaces:
    - 1.4.1 Access doors to garages for the dwellings.
    - 1.4.2 Steps leading into the garages for all dwellings other than TH12.
  - 1.5 A notation that the bike space within the garages must be designed to allow a bicycle to be placed at least 1.1m above the floor level of the garage.
  - 1.6 A notation that the dwelling TH12 must have a stepless front entry and footpath, to allow convenient access for people with limited mobility.
  - 1.7 A notation to show that TH13 garage access door and TH12 and TH13 Bellbird Drive pedestrian access gates are 920mm wide.
  - 1.8 All internal footpath gates must have a minimum opening of 920mm.
  - 1.9 Annotation stating, 'all structures (including fences, letterboxes and meter boxes) must be constructed to a maximum height of 900mm or relocated clear of a splayed area near the access way to ensure safe sight distances.'
  - 1.10 The height, location and design of fencing, letterboxes and electricity supply structures to comply with Condition 1.9 of this Planning Permit.
  - 1.11 A notation on the plans stating that windows to be screened will have fixed obscure glazing (non-openable) to a height of 1.7 metres above finished floor level. The windows may be clear and openable above 1.7 metres. Adhesive film must not be used.
  - 1.12 The south facing first floor windows of dwellings TH1 to TH6 inclusive must be screened in accordance with Condition 1.11.

- 1.13 Delete reference of rainwater tanks.
- 1.14 Tree Protection Fencing and Tree Protection Zones to be drawn on all plans.
- 1.15 Tree protection fencing around the street tree 'T2' to be bordered by the footpath, road, and adjoining crossover to the south and is to extend towards the north for 11 metres.
- 1.16 The following notations for street tree 'T2':
  - 1.16.1 Any underground services passing through the Tree Protection Zone must be installed using non-destructive methods to prevent root damage.
  - 1.16.2 No underground services are permitted within the Structural Root Zone.
- 1.17 Notation for street tree 'T1' that the tree is to be removed by Council at the cost to the owner/developer.
- 1.18 All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).
- 1.19 Any changes resulting from the amended Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 7.
- 1.20 Any changes resulting from the amended Sustainability Management Plan in accordance with Condition 13.
- 1.21 The changes required by the Department of Transport and Planning in accordance with Condition 34.
- 1.22 TH6 and 7 must be combined into one 2 storey dwelling with the west wall of the dwelling set back a further 1.5m (total of 3m) from the opposite bin enclosure, generally in accordance with Revision 'K' of the plans 'For VCAT Conference on 31 July 2025', dated 23-07-2025.
- 1.23 The bin storage area and hard waste area must be swapped, and the TH6 rainwater tank must be relocated adjacent to Bed 1.
- 1.24 1.8m high fencing installed between TH6 and TH8, and between TH17 and TH18.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

## **Other Plans**

- 2. Prior to the commencement of the development and issue of a Building Permit for the development approved under this Permit, the following plans and computations must be submitted to the Responsible Authority as a complete set. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. Construction must be in accordance with these plans. The plans must comprise the following:
  - 2.1 Drainage plans in accordance with Condition 3.
  - 2.2 Landscape plans in accordance with Condition 4.
  - 2.3 Amended Waste Management Plan in accordance with Condition 7.
  - 2.4 Amended Sustainability Management Plan in accordance with Condition 13.
  - 2.5 Construction Management Plan in accordance with Condition 27.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Drainage Plans**

3. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, drainage plans and computations must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. Construction of the drainage must be in accordance with these plans. The plans must show the following:
  - 3.1 All stormwater drainage discharge from the site connected to a legal point of discharge.
  - 3.2 An on-site detention system designed by a suitably qualified Civil Engineering Consultant to ensure no net increase in stormwater discharge from the proposed development.
  - 3.3 The on-site detention system to be installed in a suitable location for easy access and maintenance.
  - 3.4 A suitable overland flow path for the entire site to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. Details of the overland flow path are to be included on the plans.
  - 3.5 Any Environmental Sustainable Design initiatives shown on the Development Plans approved pursuant to Condition 1 of this permit.
  - 3.6 Location of fencing in accordance with the Development Plans approved pursuant to Condition 1 of this permit.
  - 3.7 All levels to be to AHD (Australian Height Datum).

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Landscaping**

4. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a landscape plan prepared by a suitably qualified Landscape architect or a suitably qualified landscape designer to the satisfaction of the responsible authority must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority in accordance with Council's 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must show:
  - 4.1 A survey (including botanical names, height and width) of all existing vegetation to be retained and / or removed.
  - 4.2 The identification and removal of all vegetation identified as an environmental weed in Knox (as outlined in Council's 'Landscape Plan Guidelines').
  - 4.3 Buildings and trees (including botanical names, height and width) on neighbouring properties within three metres of the boundary including all trees that have their Tree Protection Zone extending into the subject site.
  - 4.4 Details of the surface finishes of pathways and driveways.
  - 4.5 Details and location of all existing and proposed services including above and below ground lines, cables and pipes.
  - 4.6 The location of Tree Protection fencing and Tree Protection Zones.

- 4.7 A planting schedule of all proposed trees, shrubs and ground covers, including botanical names, common names, pot sizes, sizes at maturity, and quantities of each plant.
  - 4.8 Landscaping and planting within all open areas of the site (including additional planting within open space areas of the existing dwelling/s).
  - 4.9 The Landscape plans must show the provision of at least 13 new indigenous or native canopy trees and 17 new large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres chosen from Plant List 1, 2 or 3 of Council's Landscape Plan Guidelines for Planning Permits. The canopy trees must be a minimum 1.5 metres tall when planted and are to be in the following areas:
    - 4.9.1 Wantirna Road street setback – 4 large indigenous canopy trees and 2 small indigenous or native canopy trees.
    - 4.9.2 Bellbird Drive street setback – 2 large indigenous canopy trees, 2 medium indigenous or native canopy trees and 2 small indigenous or native canopy trees.
    - 4.9.3 Garden area between TH6 and 8 – 1 large feature shrub with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
    - 4.9.4 Garden area between TH17 and 18 – 1 large feature shrub with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
    - 4.9.5 Southern boundary – 1 small canopy tree (opposite TH5) and 15 large feature shrubs with a mature height of 4-5 metres.
  - 4.10 Planting of this site to comprise 40% of the vegetation species to be indigenous (across all plant forms) from plant list 1 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines' and 40% additional native species (across all plant forms) from plant list 2 of the 'Landscape Plan Guidelines'. Remaining plant species (20%) can be indigenous, native or exotic (across all plant forms) provided they are not listed as weeds.
  - 4.11 Notation to show the front pedestrian gates on Bellbird Drive are 920mm wide.
- To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- 5. Before the occupation of the development, the landscaping works shown on the endorsed plans must be carried out and completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
  - 6. The landscaping shown on the endorsed plans must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. Any dead, diseased or damaged plants are to be replaced.

#### **Waste Management Plan**

- 7. The Waste Management Plan (WMP) must be generally in accordance with the WMP prepared by Frater Consulting Services dated 13 March 2024, with the following change:
  - 7.1 The number of recycle bins provided is not consistent with the total recycle waste of 2880L/week generated by the development.

To the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **General**

8. All development must be in accordance with the endorsed plans.
9. The layout of buildings and works as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the written consent of the Responsible Authority.
10. Once the development has started it must be continued and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
11. Prior to the occupation of the dwellings the development is to be completed in accordance with the endorsed plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
12. All walls on the boundaries of adjoining properties must be cleaned and finished to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Sustainability Management Plan**

13. Prior to the commencement of any buildings or demolition works, an updated Sustainability Management Plan (SMP) must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The SMP must be generally in accordance with the SMP submitted, but updated to include:
  - 13.1 32 Amp power supplied to a garage switchboard of each dwelling for EV car charging.
  - 13.2 Solar photovoltaic panels with capacity maximised for the available roof area (minimum of 2kW per dwelling).
14. Prior to the occupation of the development, the development must be constructed in accordance with the endorsed SMP, except for stormwater and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) requirements which are adopted, pursuant to the collective Responsible Authority's expectations and requirements, reflected on Drainage Plans.

### **Street Tree Removal**

15. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, all costs associated with the removal of the street tree (amenity value, tree and stump removal and planting and maintaining a new tree) must be paid to Council by the owner/developer. The removal and replacement of the street tree/s must be undertaken by Council.

### **Tree Protection**

16. All trees must be identified and accurately plotted on plans, indicating proposed removal or retention and Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) where appropriate.
17. Tree protection measures must be installed prior to any commencement of works.
18. TPZs must be managed and maintained in accordance with AS-4970 Protection of Trees on Development Sites.
19. All underground services must be routed outside TPZs. If underground services must be routed within a TPZ, they should be installed by directional drilling or hydro-vac excavation if cover less than 600mm, under supervision of suitably qualified Project Arborist.
20. All pruning works require written consent from Council and must be undertaken by a suitably qualified Arborist in accordance with Australian Standard – AS4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees.

21. Excavation for any fencing within the TPZ of a tree to be retained must be limited to that required for postholes (No strip/trench excavation to occur). Post holes must be limited to 300mm in diameter and must be spaced to avoid encroachment into the Tree's SRZ wherever possible. Previous post holes are recommended to avoid further encroachment into the TPZ. Post holes located within TPZs must be excavated by hand (no machine excavation) and relocated if roots 40mm diameter or greater are encountered. Post holes and removal of the previous fence that is to be located within SRZs must be excavated by hand (no machine excavation) under the supervision of a suitably qualified arborist (minimum AQF level 5).

#### **Car Parking & Accessways**

22. Before the dwellings are occupied, driveways and car parking areas must be:
  - 22.1 Fully constructed to the minimum standard of 100mm reinforced concrete and available for use in accordance with the plans submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority; and
  - 22.2 Formed to such levels and drained so that they can be used in accordance with the approved plan; and
  - 22.3 Treated with an all-weather seal or some other durable surface; andTo the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
23. Parking areas and driveways must be kept available and maintained for these purposes at all times to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
24. A minimum 2.1m height clearance is required for the entire length of the driveway.
25. All vehicles must enter and exit the site in a forward direction.
26. Before the development is occupied, vehicular crossings must be constructed to align with approved driveways to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. All redundant crossings, crossing openings or parts thereof must be removed and replaced with footpath, naturestrip and kerb and channel to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

#### **Construction Management Plan**

27. Prior to the commencement of the development approved under this Permit, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, must be submitted to and approved by the responsible authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed as evidence of its approval and will then form part of the permit and must thereafter be complied with. The CMP must specify and deal with, but is not limited to, the following:
  - 27.1 A detailed schedule of works including a full project timing;
  - 27.2 A traffic management plan for the site, including when or whether any access points would be required to be blocked, an outline of requests to occupy public footpaths or roads, or anticipated disruptions to local services; and preferred routes for trucks delivering to the site. The traffic management measures must minimise disruption to the operation of roadway during construction;
  - 27.3 The location for the parking of all construction vehicles and construction worker vehicles during construction;

- 27.4 A fully detailed plan indicating where construction hoardings would be located;
  - 27.5 A waste management plan including the containment of waste on site, disposal of waste, stormwater treatment and on-site facilities for vehicle washing;
  - 27.6 Containment of dust, dirt and mud within the site and method and frequency of clean up procedures in the event of build-up of matter outside the site;
  - 27.7 Site security;
  - 27.8 Public safety measures;
  - 27.9 Construction times, noise and vibration controls;
  - 27.10 Restoration of any Council assets removed and/or damaged during construction;
  - 27.11 Protection works necessary to road and other infrastructure (limited to an area reasonably proximate to the site);
  - 27.12 Remediation of any damage to road and other infrastructure (limited to any areas reasonably proximate to the site);
  - 27.13 An emergency contact that is available for 24 hours a day; and
  - 27.14 All contractors associated with the construction of the development must be made aware of the requirements of the Construction Management Plan.
28. During the construction, the following must occur to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:
- 28.1 Any stormwater discharges into the stormwater drainage system is to comply with EPA guidelines;
  - 28.2 Stormwater drainage system protection measures must be installed as required to ensure that no solid waste, sediment, sand, soil, clay or stones from the premises enter the stormwater drainage system;
  - 28.3 Vehicle borne material must not accumulate on the roads abutting the site;
  - 28.4 The cleaning of machinery and equipment must take place on site and not on adjacent footpaths, roads or parks;
  - 28.5 All litter (including items such as cement bags, food packaging and plastic strapping) must be disposed of responsibly; and
  - 28.6 All site operations must comply with the EPA Publication 1254 (including all revisions or replacement guidelines).

### **Fencing**

- 29. All costs associated with the provision of the fencing are to be borne by the owner/developer under this permit.
- 30. Prior to the occupancy of the development all fencing must be in a good condition to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

### **Amenity During Construction**

31. Upon commencement and until conclusion of the development, the developer must ensure that the development does not adversely affect the amenity of the area in any way, including:
- 31.1 the appearance of building, works or materials on the land
  - 31.2 parking of motor vehicles
  - 31.3 transporting of materials or goods to or from the site
  - 31.4 hours of operation
  - 31.5 stockpiling of top soil or fill materials
  - 31.6 air borne dust emanating from the site
  - 31.7 noise
  - 31.8 rubbish and litter
  - 31.9 sediment runoff
  - 31.10 vibration

Should the development cause undue detriment to the amenity of the area then immediate remedial measures must be undertaken to address the issue as directed by, and to the satisfaction of, the Responsible Authority.

### **Stormwater**

32. Stormwater runoff from all buildings and hardstanding surfaces must be properly collected and discharged in a complete and effective system of drains within the property and must not cause or create a nuisance to abutting properties.

### **Energy Provision**

33. Any new dwelling allowed by this permit must not be connected to a reticulated gas service (within the meaning of clause 53.03 of the relevant planning scheme). This condition continues to have force and effect after the development authorised by this permit has been completed.

### **Department of Transport and Planning**

34. Prior to the commencement of the development, functional layout plans (FLPs) must be submitted to and approved by the Head, Transport for Victoria. When approved, the FLPs may be endorsed by the Responsible Authority and will then form part of the permit. The FLPs must be prepared by an appropriately qualified traffic engineer and include the following:
- 34.1 A 6.0 metres wide crossover with central splitter island to enforce left-in/left-out only access to the site access from Wantirna Road.
  - 34.2 Regulatory signage to enforce left-in/left-out only access to/from Wantirna Road.



- 34.3 Installation of white double lines on the centre of Wantirna Road to avoid illegal right turning into the subject site.
- 34.4 Any other consequential modifications to road and road related infrastructure on Wantirna Road.
35. Subsequent to the approval of the functional layout plans (FLPs), and prior to the commencement of any roadworks required by Head, Transport for Victoria under this permit, the applicant must submit detailed engineering design plans to the Head, Transport for Victoria for review and approval. The detail engineering design plans must be prepared in accordance with the approved functional layout plans.
36. Prior to the commencement of use of the development hereby approved, all roadworks as required by this permit, must be completed in accordance with the approved Functional Layout Plans and Detailed Engineering Design Plan to the satisfaction and at no cost to the Head, Transport for Victoria or the Responsible Authority.
37. No works may be commenced in, on, under or over the road reserve without having first obtained all necessary approval under the Road Management Act 2004, the Road Safety Act 1986 and any other relevant Act or Regulation created under those Acts.
38. The splitter island, access points and regulatory signage must be maintained in a fit and proper state so as not to compromise the ability to enter and exit the site in a safe manner or compromise operational efficiency and safety of the road.

#### **Permit Expiry**

39. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
- 39.1 The development is not started within two years of the date of this permit.
- 39.2 The development is not completed within four years of the date of this permit.
- Pursuant to Section 69 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987, the Responsible Authority may extend:
- The commencement date referred to if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or within six (6) months afterwards.
  - The completion date referred to if a request is made in writing within 12 months after the permit expires and the development started lawfully before the permit expired.

#### **NOTES**

Drainage Notes (to be read in conjunction with the above drainage conditions):

- Applicant shall engage a certified Engineering Consultant to analyse the site's existing drainage to determine type and size of the Onsite Detention (OSD) system. This shall be designed in accordance with the Knox City Council (Responsible Authority) Stormwater Drainage Guidelines, (copy available on Council's website), and approved drainage design methods specified in the current edition of Australian Rainfall and Runoff. It should be located preferably in a common area to the dwellings, and be easily accessible for maintenance.

- The total Permissible Site Discharge (PSD) for the property including all dwellings is **7.2L/s** to the existing Council drainage system for a **5 year ARI (18.1% AEP)** event.
- Our records indicate that VicRoads is the responsible authority for drainage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development. Connection to the VicRoads system will be according to VicRoads requirements. Where possible applicant to utilise the existing Approved Point of Discharge.
- The Applicant is required to use Australian Height Datum (AHD) to present levels in all future plans. Applicant must ensure that levels on the plan are accurate.
- Drainage works in the Road reserve or in the Council easement will require a road opening permit.
- Drainage system designed so as to avoid impact on any vegetation shown on the endorsed plans as being retained.
- Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) should be addressed as part of this development, e.g. water storage tanks, swale drains, etc.

Other Notes:

- A building permit must be obtained before development is commenced.
- Buildings are not allowed to be built over Council easements.
- The dwellings must achieve a minimum 6-Star Energy Rating.
- In accordance with Council policy, an 8.5% public open space contribution may apply in the event of the subdivision of the land.
- To arrange an inspection of the Tree Protection fencing please contact Council Landscape Team on 9298 8125.
- Indigenous plants can be purchased through approved indigenous nurseries, as listed in the Knox City Council 'Preferred Local Replacement Plants' Information Sheet.
- The street tree 'T1' can be removed upon receipt of \$447.77. Total cost for street tree removal includes amenity value (using the *City of Melbourne- Amenity Value Formula*), cost of tree and stump removal, and planting and maintaining a new tree for 2 years, in accordance with Council's Green Streets Policy. For details regarding the cost and timing of the removal and replacement of street trees, please contact Council's Active Open Space Team on (03) 9298 8425.
- Dwelling numbers as shown on the endorsed plans do not necessarily indicate any future street numbers. Property (street) numbering shall be in accordance with Council's Property (Street) Numbering Policy. Information regarding this can be obtained from Council's Property and Revenue Services Department on 9298 8215.
- Letterboxes and all other structures (including meter boxes) shall be constructed to a maximum height of 900mm or relocated clear of a splayed area (2m x 2.5m) in accordance with AS2890.1, Clause 3.2.4 to ensure safe sight distances. Letterboxes shall face towards the street frontage.

- Internal public lighting shall be provided to the satisfaction of the relevant authority and in accordance with AS1158. This would generally be low height or bollard type lighting to avoid spill-over into adjacent properties. It may be sensor activated, to avoid all night running costs.
- Raised concrete slabs on the existing footpath fronting the site should be grounded.
- All litter and rubbish associated with the construction must be contained on site at all times.

Department of Transport and Planning note:

- The proposed development requires works within the road reserve. Separate approval under the Road Management Act 2004 for this activity may be required from the Head, Transport for Victoria. Please contact the Department of Transport and Planning for works within the road reserve prior to commencing any works.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Officer Report - 276 Wantirna Road Wantirna [6.2.1 - 12 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Attachments - 276 Wantirna Road Wantirna [6.2.2 - 6 pages]



## Planning Application P/2023/6476 for the construction of 23 dwellings and alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna.

### 1. Summary:

Subject Site:	276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna
Proposed Development:	Construction of 23 dwellings and alter access to a road in a TRZ2
Existing Land Use:	Vacant
Site Area:	3,227m <sup>2</sup>
Planning Scheme Controls:	Residential Growth Zone 1 (RGZ1)
Application Received:	30 October 2023
Number of Objections:	246
PCC Meeting:	Yes
Ward:	Collier

### 2. Purpose

Planning Application P/2023/6476 proposed the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 at 276 Wantirna Road, Wantirna. The application received 246 objections and was considered by Council at its meeting on 28 April 2025, where it was determined to refuse the application. The applicant subsequently lodged an appeal at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against the refusal of the application.

Two compulsory conferences were held at VCAT on 22 July 2025 and 31 July 2025 and were attended by parties to the appeal. An agreement between all parties was reached at these conferences, which resulted in 'without prejudice' plans being circulated for further consideration by Council. Amongst other changes, the 'without prejudice' plans reduced the number of dwellings proposed from 24 down to 23, reduced the height of a dwelling from three to two storeys and makes modifications to the waste storage area.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Council Planning Officer's assessment of the 'without prejudice' plans to assist in forming a position on the modified proposal. It should be read in conjunction with the other attachments.



## Attachment 1

### 3. Background

#### 3.1 Subject Site and Surrounds

The location of the subject site and surrounds is shown in Attachment 2.

- The subject site is a single allotment located on the western side of Wantirna Road, Wantirna.
- The site is rectangular in shape with approximate dimensions of 87 metres deep by 36 metres wide and has a lot size of approximately 3,227m<sup>2</sup>. The topography of the land generally falls from south to north across the site by approximately 2 metres.
- The site is a double depth block (as well as double width) that spans across between Wantirna Road on the east boundary and Bellbird Drive on the west boundary.
- The site is currently vacant, but previously contained a building formerly used as a childcare centre, and there were car parks located on both sides of the property with access to their respective roads.
- The nearest bus stop is located on Wantirna Road approximately 60 metres to the south.
- The subject site and surrounds are located within an established residential area, with the exception of the subject site, properties that front Bellbird Drive are within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 4 (NRZ4) and properties that front Wantirna Road are located within the Residential Growth Zone (RGZ). Surrounding properties are predominantly developed with single and double storey dwellings, with some examples of unit and townhouse development on sites that front Wantirna Road.
- The land is encumbered with a 2.44-metre-wide drainage and sewerage easement running north-south across the centre of the site.
- The Certificate of Title for the site contains a Section 173 Agreement, this agreement required demolition of the former buildings and limits the height of development on the western section of the site to a maximum of 9 metres.

#### 3.2 The Proposal (as assessed by Council on 28 April 2025)

The original proposal sought permission for the construction of 24 dwellings and to alter access to a road in a TRZ2. Details of the original proposal were as follows:

- To construct 24 dwellings comprising of six 2-bed dwellings, seventeen 3-bed dwellings and one 4-bed dwelling.
- The western half of the development (Bellbird Drive side) will be double-storey whilst the eastern half (Wantirna Road side) will be triple-storey.
- The dwellings will all have a reverse living layout with the main living space on the first floor, including balconies as the secluded private open space.
- The 2-bed dwellings will have single garages, whilst all the other dwellings will have two parking spaces, with some of these being double garages and some being in the form of a single garage plus a tandem car space.
- The development will have a maximum height of 10.07 metres (northeast corner of the site).
- The proposal will have direct driveway access to Wantirna Road and gated driveway access to Bellbird Drive.
- There will be a centrally positioned waste bin storage area, including a turning area for waste trucks to be able to exit the site in a forward direction.

#### 3.3 Assessment of the Application

On 28 April 2025, the original application was refused by Council for the following reasons:

1. *The proposal fails to satisfy relevant Municipal Planning Strategies, particularly Clause 02.03-4 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Clause 02.03-5 (Housing) of the Knox Planning Scheme.*



## Attachment 1

2. *The proposal fails to satisfy relevant Planning Policy Framework strategies and objectives, particularly Clause 15 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Clause 16 (Housing) of the Knox Planning Scheme.*
3. *The design outcome is not considered to be respectful of the existing or preferred neighbourhood character, due to the scale of the buildings and resultant impact on the amenity of adjoining residential properties as well as future residents of the proposed development.*
4. *Non-compliance with the following objectives of Clause 55 of the Scheme as follows:*
  - a) *Neighbourhood Character, Standard B1 (Clause 55.02-1);*
  - b) *Dwelling Diversity, Standard B3 (Clause 55.02-3);*
  - c) *Side and rear setbacks, Standard B17 (Clause 55.04-1);*
  - d) *Overlooking, Standard B22 (Clause 55.04-6).*

### 3.4 VCAT – Compulsory Conference

Following Council's decision, the applicant lodged an appeal with VCAT against Council's refusal.

A compulsory conference was held at VCAT on 22 July 2025. A compulsory conference is a meeting chaired by a member of the Tribunal with parties to the appeal in attendance. The purpose of the compulsory conference is to identify and clarify the issues in dispute and to promote a settlement of the dispute. Parties to the conference were Council, the permit applicant (including architect and owner) and three objector parties (who represented numerous other objectors).

During this conference, all parties agreed to three outcomes:

- (a) modifications to the plans that would combine two of the proposed dwellings into one dwelling, reduction in the number of dwellings to 23;
- (b) the south facing windows on the first floor of proposed Dwellings TH1 to TH6 would be appropriately screened (to be included on the draft conditions submitted by Council); and
- (c) expert opinions would be sought from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Council and the applicant regarding the safety of Wantirna Road if the proposed Bellbird Drive access were to be removed.

A subsequent compulsory conference was held on 31 July 2025. An agreement was reached between all parties that:

- (a) the 'without prejudice' plans showing the two dwellings combined into one dwelling was generally accepted (essentially making Dwelling TH6 slightly wider but reduced from three-storey to two-storey built form, and deleting Dwelling TH7 altogether), and subject to a condition for the bin storage area and hard waste area to be swapped around due to the wider space now available next to Dwelling TH6 to accommodate the turning movements of rubbish trucks;
- (b) the updated draft conditions submitted by Council were accepted; and
- (c) it was accepted that all expert opinions advised safety risk would be increased on Wantirna Road if the Bellbird Drive access were to be removed and that therefore, the Bellbird Drive access must be retained.



## Attachment 1

As the Council decision was made at a Council meeting, the Council planning officer did not have authority to settle the matter at VCAT. Therefore, the decision on the 'without prejudice' plans must be made through a Council meeting. VCAT have required that Council advise of its position on the 'without prejudice' plans by 26 August 2025.

The 'without prejudice' plans propose the following changes:

- Delete Dwelling 7.
- Modify Dwelling 6 to be wider but reduced from three storey to two storey.
- Wantirna Road access to be Left-in/Left-out only.

Other key changes proposed in the form of conditions on permit:

- The south facing first floor windows of Dwellings TH1 to TH6 inclusive must be screened.
- The bin storage area and hard waste area must be swapped, and the Dwelling 6 rainwater tank must be relocated adjacent to Bed 1.

Should Council not support the revised plans, the application will be considered by VCAT at a full hearing, which is listed for 16 September 2025.

## 4. Consultation

### 4.1 Advertising

The original application was advertised twice, both times by way of two (2) signs on the site and notices were sent to adjoining property owners and occupiers (and during the second round of advertising, all previous objectors were also sent a notice). The application was advertised twice as it was amended from only providing access via Bellbird Drive to then include additional direct access to Wantirna Road. In total, 246 objections were received. The objections related to traffic congestion, car parking, landscaping, overlooking, neighbourhood character, waste bin location, drainage, and amenity impacts.

### 4.2 Referrals

The original application was referred to internal departments as well as the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for advice. The initial referral responses are still relevant.

It is noted that DTP provided further advice on 30 July 2025, prior to the second compulsory conference, clarifying its position that Bellbird Drive access must be retained and that the access to Wantirna Road is to be left-in/left-out only.

## 5. Discussion

This section considers the proposed development in light of the provisions of the Knox Planning Scheme including the Planning Policy Framework and any other relevant policies and objectives. This application falls within the transition period where an assessment must be made against Clause 55 (ResCode) prior to Amendment VC267, including Schedule 1 to the RGZ (prior to 6 March 2025). The relevant version of the planning scheme is therefore VC266 (3 March 2025).



## Attachment 1

## 5.1 Zoning and Overlays

### 5.1.1 Zone

The site is located within the Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 1 (RGZ1). A permit is required for the construction of two or more dwellings on a lot.

Schedule 1 to the Residential Growth Zone varied the ResCode requirements for Standard B6 (Minimum street setback) and Standard B13 (Landscaping).

- *The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Residential Growth Zone to provide housing at increased densities in buildings up to and including four storeys. The proposal contains two and three storey dwellings with a range of bedrooms numbers, including two, three and four-bedroom dwellings and two storey dwellings located near the more sensitive interfaces, being the rear and southern parts of the site.*
- *Minimum street setback – Complies. A minimum 6 metre setback is provided to both the Wantirna Road and Bellbird Drive frontages.*
- *Landscaping – The site can accommodate the landscaping requirements of Standard B13.*

### 5.1.2 Overlays

The subject site is not affected by any Overlays.

## 5.2 Municipal Planning Strategy

Council's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) encourages development occurring with the necessary consideration to such matters as managing population growth, encouraging sustainable development, and influencing the urban form so that Knox itself becomes more sustainable.

The MPS makes specific reference to the diversifying and aging population in Knox which will see an increase in the number of smaller household types, with 'lone person' and 'couple only' households making up just over half of all within 20 years.

**Clause 02.03-4 Built Environment and Heritage:** Knox takes a 'whole of city' approach to the creation of liveable and sustainable environments, with a focus on place-based planning with a strong green and leafy landscape being the unifying element of the neighbourhood character of Knox.

Development should be accessible, sustainable and adaptable to meet existing and future community needs and all people in Knox should feel and be safe.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure well designed development to create functional, architecturally attractive, sustainable and accessible places and buildings.
- Support building design that addresses the needs of changing commercial and residential markets and household structures.
- Strengthen the unifying 'green and leafy' character of Knox across all residential areas.
- Ensure development responds to the residential typologies and the desired future character, built form, and natural environmental elements that make up the neighbourhood character of each residential area.
- Implement environmentally sustainable design in development to improve housing liveability and amenity for occupants.
- Minimise car dependency and improve the use of sustainable transport modes.





## Attachment 1

**Clause 02.03-5 Housing:** The Housing theme implements the Knox Housing Strategy 2015. In managing the City of Knox's current and future housing needs, Council supports a scaled approach to residential development. This scaled approach recognises that some parts of the City will need to accommodate change, due to population growth and the community's changing household needs. Development in residential areas will need to respond positively to the desired future character of the local area and take account of the particular built form and natural environmental elements that make up the neighbourhood character of Knox.

The subject site is located within an "Activity Area", which contains a range of shops, services and employment and have good access to a range of public transport options. A greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged within these areas.

*Response: The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the MPS for the following reasons:*

- *Housing Choice - The development provides two, three and four-bedroom dwellings that adds to the diversity of housing types and size in a location offering good access to services and provides dwellings for the projected increase in demand in the number of smaller household types.*
- *Existing infrastructure – The site is located within a fully serviced area.*
- *Location – The location of the site is identified in the Housing Framework Plan to be in an "Activity Area" where a greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged.*

### 5.3 Policy Consideration: Planning Policy Framework

Planning policy requires Council to integrate a range of policies relevant to the issues to be determined, and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development. The key themes for the assessment of the application include Settlement, Built Environment and Heritage and Housing.

#### 5.3.1 Settlement

Planning is to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns and investment in transport, utility, social, community and commercial infrastructure and services.

**Clause 11.03-1S – Activity centres:** To encourage the concentration of major retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments into activity centres that are highly accessible to the community.

*Response: The proposed development provides a different type of housing, including higher density housing, at a location that is well-serviced by parks, shops, medical centres, schools, and a bus stop nearby.*

#### 5.3.2 Built Environment and Heritage

Planning is to recognise the role of urban design, building design, heritage and energy and resource efficiency in delivering liveable and sustainable cities, towns and neighbourhoods.

**Clause 15.01-1S – Urban design:** To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.
- Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.



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- Ensure that the design and location of publicly accessible private spaces, including car parking areas, forecourts and walkways, is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.
- Promote good urban design along and abutting transport corridors.

**Clause 15.01-1L – Urban design on residentially zoned land:** To ensure that the design and scale of development is consistent with the housing types encouraged in each area and makes a positive contribution to the built form of the area.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Provide visual interest and articulation to present an appropriate scale and detail to the street frontage and adjoining sites.
- Design street facades with an appropriate scale, rhythm and proportion that respond to the site's context.
- Avoid large blank walls and facades.
- Ensure site services and car parking areas are sensitively designed and sited so as to be as visually unobtrusive as possible from the street and adjoining sites.

**Clause 15.01-2S – Building design:** To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure a comprehensive site analysis forms the starting point of the design process and provides the basis for the consideration of height, scale, massing and energy performance of new development.
- Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment.
- Improve the energy performance of buildings through siting and design measures.
- Minimise stormwater discharge through site layout and landscaping measures that support on-site infiltration and stormwater reuse.
- Ensure buildings and their interface with the public realm support personal safety, perceptions of safety and property security.
- Ensure development considers and responds to transport movement networks and provides safe access and egress for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Ensure development provides landscaping that responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas.

**Clause 15.01-2L – Accessible design:** Ensure the design of development considers the needs of people with limited mobility.

**Clause 15.01-2L – Environmentally sustainable development:** To achieve best practice in environmentally sustainable development from the design stage through to construction and operation.

**Clause 15.01-5S – Neighbourhood character:** To recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

Relevant strategic directions include:



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- Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.
- Ensure the preferred neighbourhood character is consistent with medium and higher density housing outcomes in areas identified for increased housing.

**Clause 15.01-5L – Neighbourhood character:** To facilitate more intensive residential development that is architecturally and functionally well designed, while retaining the ‘green and leafy’ character when viewed from the street.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Enhance the unifying ‘green and leafy’ landscape character of Knox.
- Support development that makes a positive contribution to the area’s built form.
- Provide no, low or transparent front fencing.
- Provide single crossovers for driveways.
- Establish new styles of housing within existing streetscapes.
- Establish consistent street setbacks as part of the future character of the area.
- Provide wide, upper floor balconies fronting the street and any adjoining public open space to maximise passive surveillance.
- Encourage developments of three or more dwellings to provide a mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms).
- Encourage at least one dwelling in developments of three or more dwellings contains a bedroom, kitchen, bath or shower, and a toilet and wash basin at ground floor level.
- Locate carports and garages behind the line of or underneath the dwelling or in the rear yard.

*Response: The proposed development is consistent with the Built Environment and Heritage objectives and strategic direction for the following reasons:*

- *The design contributes to providing a safe urban environment by presenting well to both street frontages and provides well designed communal spaces.*
- *The proposed built form is of a scale that is consistent with the preferred housing typology for an Activity Area whilst appropriately responding to the sensitive interfaces.*
- *The proposal provides visual interest and articulation to present an appropriate scale and detail to the street frontage and adjoining sites.*
- *Subject to minor modification, the design achieves the required environmentally sustainable design requirements.*
- *The proposal is consistent with the preferred neighbourhood character, providing a mix of dwelling sizes and satisfying the required landscaping.*

### 5.3.3 Housing

Planning should provide for housing diversity, and ensure the efficient provision of supporting infrastructure and should ensure the long term sustainability of new housing, including access to services, walkability to activity centres, public transport, schools and open space.



## Attachment 1

**Clause 16.01-1S – Housing supply:** To facilitate well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensure that an appropriate quantity, quality and type of housing is provided, including aged care facilities and other housing suitable for older people, supported accommodation for people with disability, rooming houses, student accommodation and social housing.
- Encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to jobs, services and public transport.
- Identify opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.
- Facilitate diverse housing that offers choice and meets changing household needs by widening housing diversity through a mix of housing types.

**Clause 16.01-1L – Housing supply:** To support a scaled approach to residential development that is consistent with preferred dwelling typologies for each area as shown on the Housing Framework Plan that forms part of this clause.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Encourage housing growth in Activity areas.
- Support developments of three or more dwellings that include a mix of sizes, including one-and two-bedroom dwellings.
- Encourage villa units, townhouses and apartments.

**Clause 16.01-2S – Housing affordability:** To deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services.

Relevant strategic directions include:

- Ensuring land supply continues to be sufficient to meet demand.
- Increasing choice in housing type, tenure and cost to meet the needs of households as they move through life cycle changes and to support diverse communities.
- Promoting good housing and urban design to minimise negative environmental impacts and keep costs down for residents and the wider community.

*Response: The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the Planning Policy Framework direction for housing provision for the following reasons:*

- *Housing Choice – The development provides two, three and four-bedroom dwellings that adds to the diversity of housing types in a location offering good access to services and provides dwellings for the projected increase in demand in the number of smaller household types.*
- *Location – The location of the site is well located in relation to jobs, transport and services and is identified in the Housing Framework Plan to be in an “Activity Area” where a greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged.*

#### 5.4 Particular Provisions

**Clause 52.06 – Car Parking:** Prior to a new use commencing or a new building being occupied the car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 must be provided on the land or as approved under Clause 52.06-3 to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.



## Attachment 1

Clause 52.06-5 specifies a ratio of one car space for each one- or two-bedroom dwelling and two car spaces to each three or more bedroom dwelling (with studies or studios that are separate rooms counted as a bedrooms). As the subject site is located within the Principal Public Transport Network area no visitor spaces are required to be provided. A permit may be granted to reduce or to waive the number of car spaces required by the table.

Clause 52.06-8 details the design standards for car parking, such as car space dimensions and minimum access widths.

*Response: The proposed development satisfies the provision of car parking specified in Clause 52.06, specifically:*

- *Each dwelling is provided with the required number of car parking spaces.*
- *The design of the car parking meets the requirements of this clause.*

**Clause 52.29 – Land Adjacent to the Principal Road Network:** A permit is required to create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2.

- *The application was referred externally to the Department of Transport and Planning, which had no objection subject to conditions being included on any permit issued if the application is approved.*
- *The conditions primarily focussed on the provision of a left-in/left-out crossover design for the Wantirna Road access, which was to improve safety and minimise congestion.*

#### 5.5 Clause 55 – Two or More Dwellings on a Lot and Residential Buildings (ResCode)

##### **Neighbourhood Character and Infrastructure**

Neighbourhood Character – The development complies with Neighbourhood Character, refer above.

Residential Policy – Complies, refer above.

Dwelling Diversity – Complies.

Integration with the Street – Complies.

##### **Site Layout and Building Massing**

Street Setbacks – Complies.

Building Height – Complies.

Site Cover/Permeability – Complies.

Energy Efficiency – Complies.

Open Space – Complies.

Safety – Complies.

Landscaping – Complies, a condition of any permit to issue will require an amended landscape plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Access – Complies.

Parking Location – Complies.



## Attachment 1

### Amenity Impacts

Side and Rear Setbacks –The proposal does not comply with this Standard along the north elevation of Dwellings TH18-TH24 (the northeastern dwellings). Specifically, the northern corner of the roof encroaches into the northern side setback by 0.69m.

Although the proposal does not comply with this Standard it does comply with the Side and Rear Setback Objective as these dwellings are located on the south side of the adjoining property, there will not be any impact on overshadowing and it is in an area that adjoins land that is within the Residential Growth Zone.

Walls on Boundaries – Complies.

Daylight to Existing Windows – Complies.

North Facing Windows – Complies.

Overshadowing Open Space – Complies.

Overlooking – Complies subject to a condition on any permit to issue to screen the south facing first floor windows of Dwellings TH1 to TH6 inclusive.

Internal Views – Complies.

Noise Impacts - Complies.

### On-Site Amenity and Facilities

Accessibility – Complies.

Daylight to New Windows – Complies.

Private Open Space – Complies.

Solar Access – Complies.

Storage – Complies.

### Details Design

Design Detail – Complies.

Common Property – Complies.

Site Services – Complies subject to a condition on any permit to swap the waste storage facilities.

Front Fence – Complies.

## 5.5 General Decision Guidelines

Clause 65 of the Knox Planning Scheme and Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 set out decision guidelines/matters which the responsible authority must consider when deciding any planning application.

- The decision guidelines of Clause 65 of the Knox Planning Scheme and Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act (1987) have been appropriately considered.



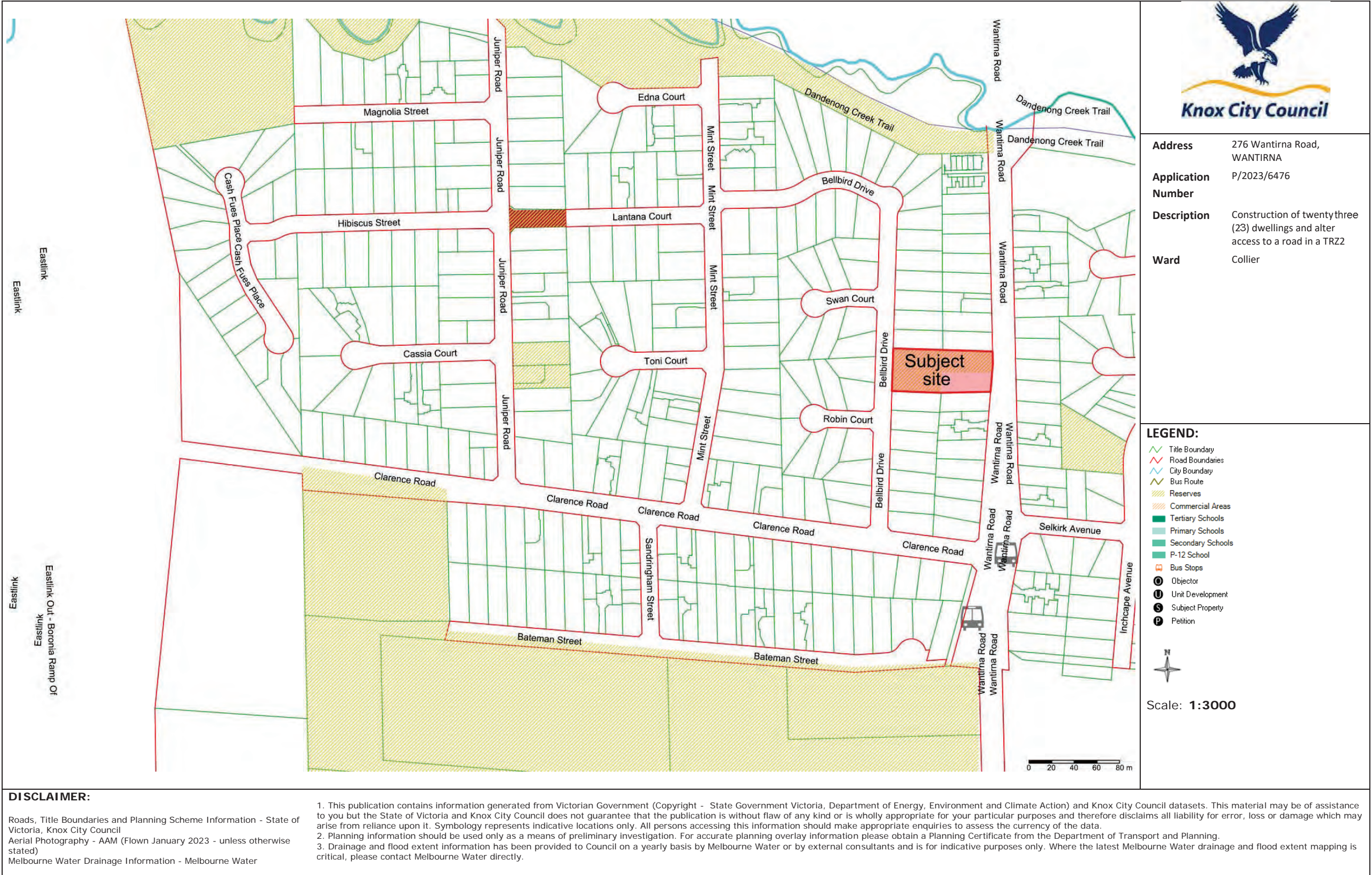
## Attachment 1

### 6. Conclusion

Clause 71.02-3 of the Knox Planning Scheme requires Council to balance relative policy objectives when making decisions to ensure resulting development is sustainable and achieves a net community gain. In this context, the proposal is considered appropriate given the following:

- The development is consistent with Planning Policy Framework, Clause 11.03 (Settlement), Clause 15.01 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Clause 16.01 (Housing) of the Knox Planning Scheme.
- The proposal complies with the purpose of the Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 1.
- The development is compliant with ResCode (Clause 55 of the Knox Planning Scheme).
- The development provides an appropriate balance between the need for additional housing within an established residential area while ensuring the amenity of occupants and adjoining residents is not compromised.











DRAWING SCHEDULE

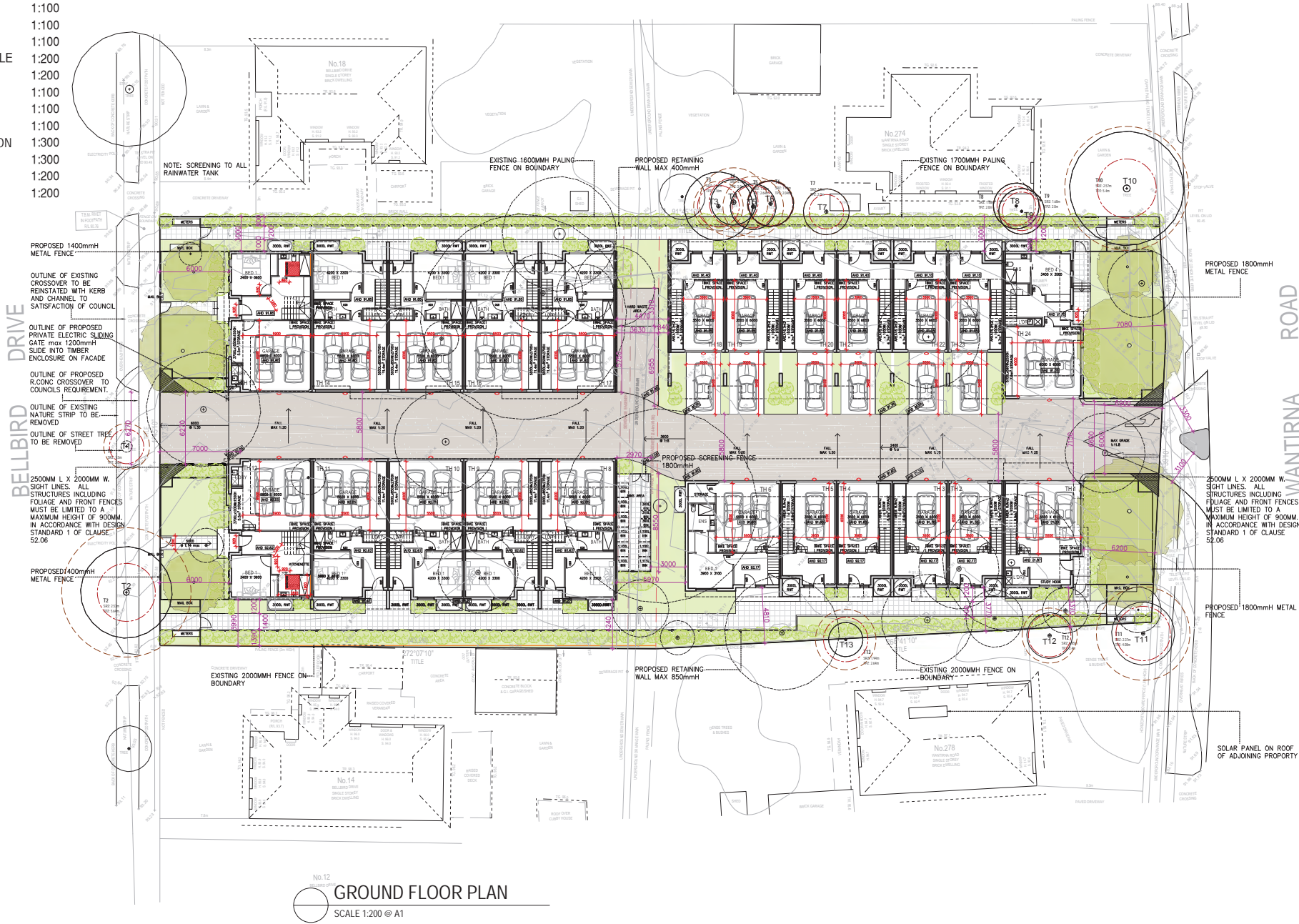
TPA01	GROUND FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA02	FIRST FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA03	SECOND FLOOR PLAN	1:200
TPA04	GROUND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA05	FIRST FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA06	SECOND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 1)	1:100
TPA07	GROUND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA08	FIRST FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA09	SECOND FLOOR PLAN (STAGE 2)	1:100
TPA10	ELEVATIONS AND MATERIAL SCHEDULE	1:200
TPA11	STREET SCAP ELEVATIONS	1:200
TPA12	ELEVATIONS 1:100 1	1:100
TPA13	ELEVATIONS 1:100 2	1:100
TPA14	ELEVATIONS 1:100 3	1:100
TPA15	NEIGHBOURHOOD AND SITE DESCRIPTION	1:300
TPA16	DESIGN RESPONSE	1:300
TPA17	SHADOW ANALYSIS	1:200
TPA18	SHADOW ANALYSIS	1:200

ESD NOTES

- WATER AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- RAINWATER TANK TO BE CONNECTED TO THE TOILETS AND LAUNDRY
  - NATIVE OR DROUGHT-TOLERANT SPECIES TO BE USED FOR LANDSCAPED AREAS. WATERING WILL NOT BE REQUIRED AFTER AN INITIAL PERIOD WHEN PLANTS ARE GETTING ESTABLISHED. IF IRRIGATION IS REQUIRED, IT WILL BE CONNECTED TO RAINWATER TANKS.
  - WELS RATING FOR WATER FITTINGS/FIXTURES (REFER TO ESD REPORT); FIXTURES PROVIDED AS PART OF BASE BUILDING WORK HAVE TO BE CHOSEN WITHIN ONE WELS STAR OF BEST AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF PURCHASE.
- ENERGY EFFICIENCY
- COMMITMENT TO 4W/m<sup>2</sup> LIGHTING DENSITY IN THE DWELLINGS
  - RETRACTABLE EXTERNAL CLOTHES DRYING LINE TO BE PROVIDED
  - LIGHTING SENSORS FOR EXTERNAL LIGHTING TO BE PROVIDED
  - COMMITMENT TO 6.5 STAR AVERAGE ENERGY RATING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
- INDOOR ENVIRONMENT QUALITY
- DOUBLE GLAZING ON ALL HABITABLE ROOMS
- TRANSPORT
- ONE BIKE SPACE LOCATION FOR EACH DWELLING PROVIDED IN THE GARAGE
- WASTE
- THREE BINS SYSTEM INCLUDING RUBBISH, RECYCLING, AND ORGANIC/GARDEN WASTE, AS WELL AS FUTURE GLASS WASTE PROVISION PROVIDED

LEGEND

- PROPOSED NEW TREES
- EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED
- RETRACTABLE CLOTHES LINE CONCEALED IN COURTYARD (TYPICAL)
- EXISTING TREE TO BE REMOVED
- SENSORS LIGHTING OVER GARAGE DOOR



AREA ANALYSIS

SITE AREA	3227.3 m <sup>2</sup>
No. DWELLINGS PROPOSED	24
OVERALL BUILDING AREA	3852 m <sup>2</sup>
BUILDING SITE COVERAGE	1810.0m <sup>2</sup> 56.0%
IMPERVIOUS SITE COVERAGE (EXCLUSIVE OF BUILDING SITE COVERAGE)	775m <sup>2</sup> 24.0%
PERMEABLE SITE COVERAGE (PERMEABLE TO RAIN AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE)	20.0%
GARDEN AREA	910m <sup>2</sup> 28.2%

TH 1		TH 18 - TH23	
GARAGE	42.0m <sup>2</sup>	GARAGE	26.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	20.5m <sup>2</sup>	GROUND FLOOR	15.0m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	62.0m <sup>2</sup>	FIRST FLOOR	49.0m <sup>2</sup>
SECOND FLOOR	46.0m <sup>2</sup>	SECOND FLOOR	44.0m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.5m <sup>2</sup>	BALCONY	15.4m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	187.0m <sup>2</sup>	OVERALL	149.9m <sup>2</sup>

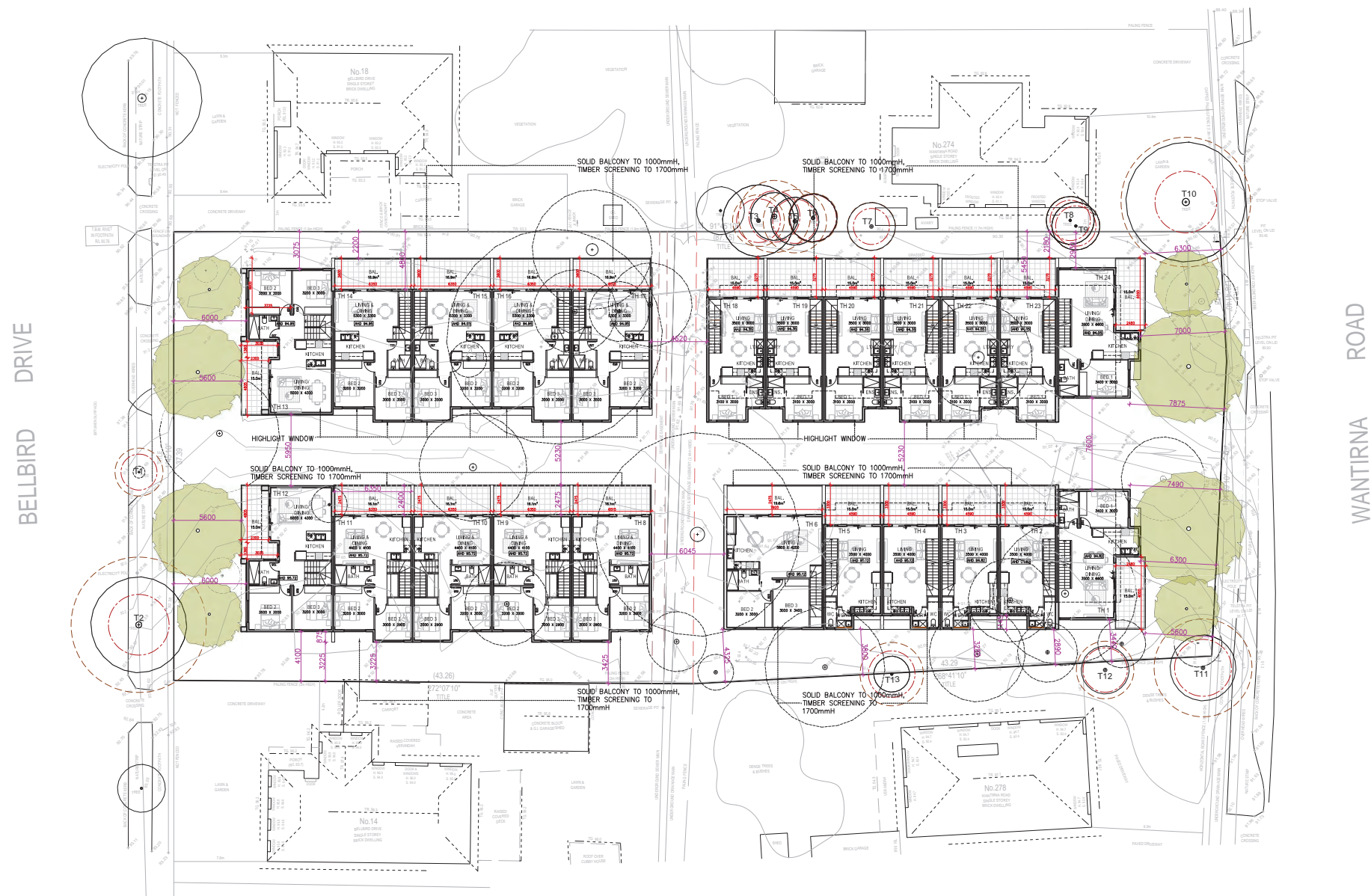
TH 2 - TH7		TH24	
GARAGE	27.5m <sup>2</sup>	GARAGE	44.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	16.5m <sup>2</sup>	GROUND FLOOR	39.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	40.0m <sup>2</sup>	FIRST FLOOR	62.0m <sup>2</sup>
SECOND FLOOR	44.0m <sup>2</sup>	SECOND FLOOR	46.0m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.0m <sup>2</sup>	BALCONY	16.5m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	143.0m <sup>2</sup>	OVERALL	208.0m <sup>2</sup>

TH 8 - TH11	
GARAGE	41.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	38.0m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	67.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.2m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	162.2m <sup>2</sup>

TH 12	
GARAGE	45.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	42.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	74.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.4m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	178.4m <sup>2</sup>

TH 13	
GARAGE	45.0m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	42.5m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	74.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	16.4m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	178.4m <sup>2</sup>

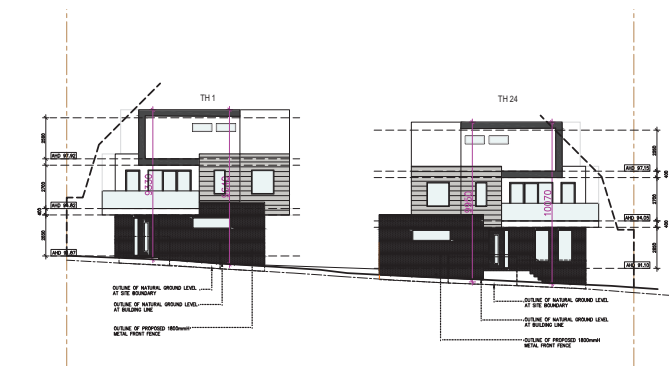
TH 14 - TH17	
GARAGE	41.5m <sup>2</sup>
GROUND FLOOR	38.0m <sup>2</sup>
FIRST FLOOR	69.5m <sup>2</sup>
BALCONY	15.2m <sup>2</sup>
OVERALL	164.2m <sup>2</sup>



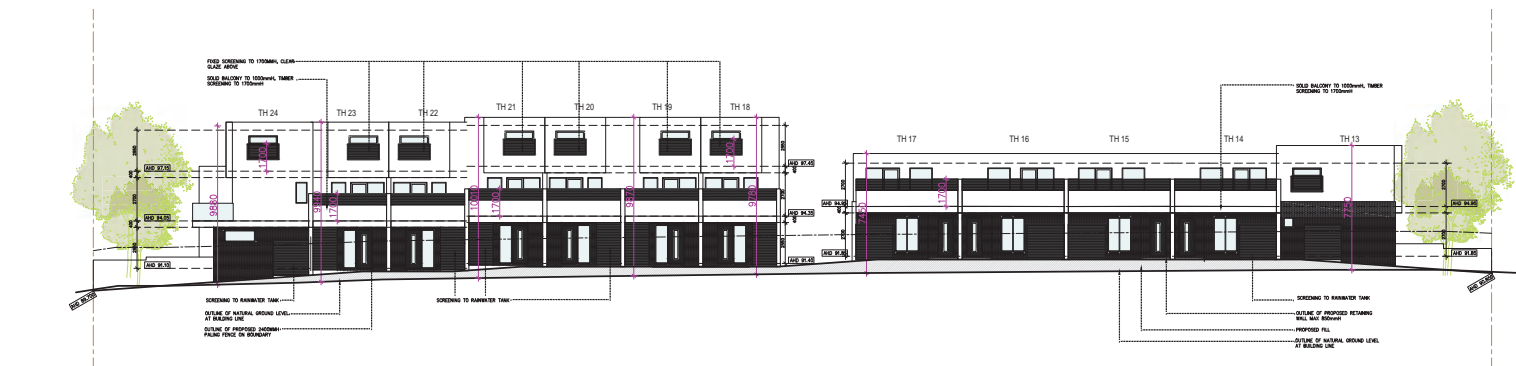
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



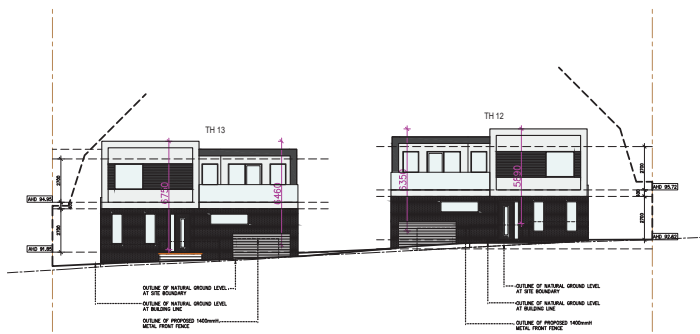




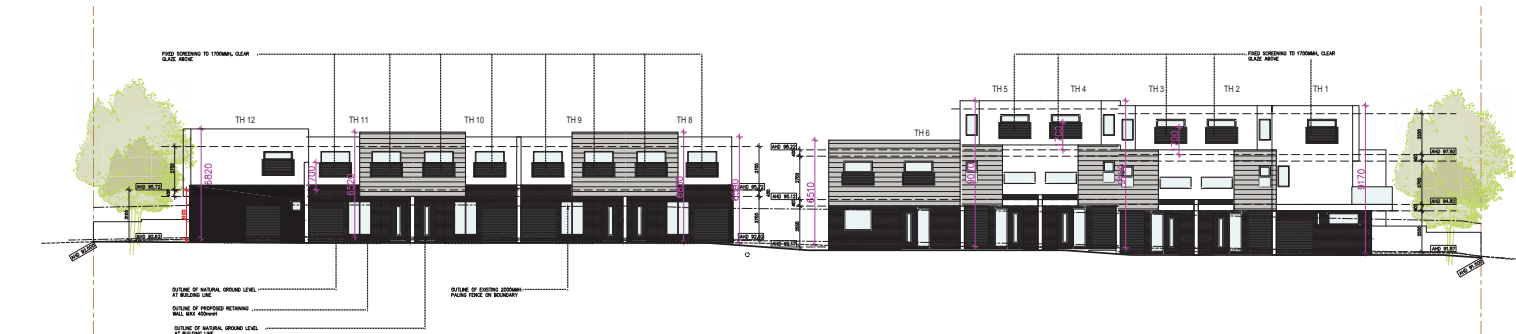
**EAST ELEVATION**  
IE FACING WANTIRNA ROAD  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



**NORTH ELEVATION**  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



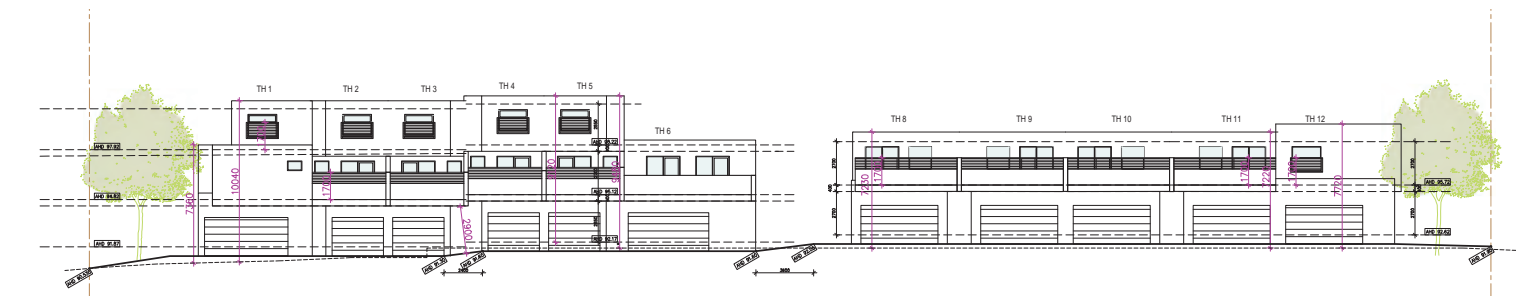
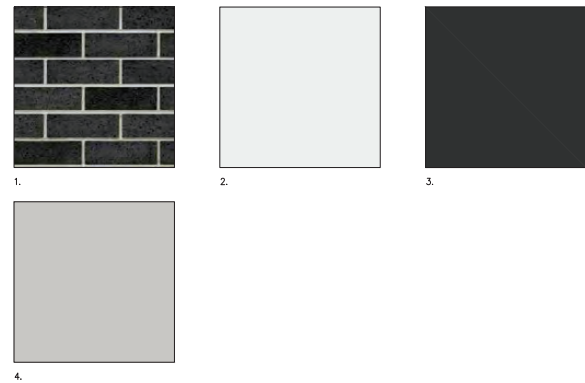
**WEST ELEVATION**  
IE FACING BELLBIRD DRIVE  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



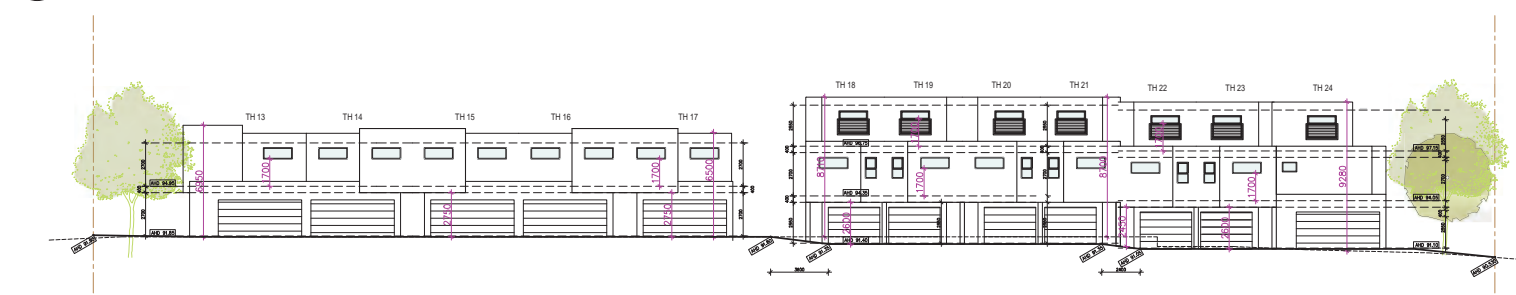
**SOUTH ELEVATION**  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1

**MATERIALS AND FINISHES SCHEDULE**

- ROOF: CORRUGATED STEEL ROOF OR SIMILAR
- WALLS:
- 1. SELECT FACE BRICKWORK, SELECT AUSTRAL BRICKS METALLIX RANGE "GUNMETAL BLUE" OR SIMILAR
  - 2. SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "LEXICON HALF" OR SIMILAR
  - 3. SELECT CEMENT RENDER, SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR
  - 4. SELECT JAMES HARDIE CLADDING, SELECT OBLOQUE CLADDING "DULUX DIEKKAU" OR SIMILAR
  - 5. SELECT DULUX COLOUR "MONUMENT" OR SIMILAR
- WINDOWS:
- 6. ALUMINIUM FRAMED WINDOWS, BLACK ANODISED
  - 7. CLEAR GLAZING
  - 8. OBSOURE GLAZING
- OUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES:
- FRONT DOOR:
- DRIVEWAY:
- GARAGE DOOR:



**INTERNAL NORTH ELEVATION**  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1



**INTERNAL SOUTH ELEVATION**  
SCALE 1:200 @ A1

 <p>SUMMITVEST design   architecture</p> <p>SUMMITVEST DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE U21 105-111 RICKETTS ROAD MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149 03 9598 9851 (M&amp;A) 710 217 ADMIN@SUMMITV.D.COM</p>	<p>PROJECT</p> <p><b>PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT</b> 276 WANTIRNA ROAD WANTIRNA</p> <p>FOR VCAT CONFERENCE ON 31 JULY 2025</p> <p>CLIENT</p>	<p>REVISIONS</p> <table><tr><th>NO.</th><th>DATE</th><th>NOTES</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>26-10-2023</td><td>TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>21-02-2024</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>25-03-2024</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>22-03-2024</td><td>FOR CONSULTANTS REVIEW</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>25-03-2024</td><td>FOR SCOT'S SUBMISSION</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>22-08-2024</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>26-08-2024</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>25-09-2024</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>23-01-2025</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>13-03-2025</td><td>COUNCIL'S REP</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>23-07-2025</td><td>FOR VCAT CONFERENCE ON 31 JULY 2025</td></tr></table>	NO.	DATE	NOTES	1	26-10-2023	TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION	2	21-02-2024	COUNCIL'S REP	3	25-03-2024	COUNCIL'S REP	4	22-03-2024	FOR CONSULTANTS REVIEW	5	25-03-2024	FOR SCOT'S SUBMISSION	6	22-08-2024	COUNCIL'S REP	7	26-08-2024	COUNCIL'S REP	8	25-09-2024	COUNCIL'S REP	9	23-01-2025	COUNCIL'S REP	10	13-03-2025	COUNCIL'S REP	11	23-07-2025	FOR VCAT CONFERENCE ON 31 JULY 2025	<p>TITLE</p> <p><b>ELEVATIONS</b></p> <p>SHEET 10/ 19</p> <p>DRAWN BY RL</p>	<p>SHEET NO. <b>TPA10</b></p> <p>SCALE 1:200 @ A1</p> <p>DATE 23-07-2025</p> <p>REVISION</p> <p></p> <p><b>JB23-07</b></p>
NO.	DATE	NOTES																																						
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11	23-07-2025	FOR VCAT CONFERENCE ON 31 JULY 2025																																						

## 7 Public Question Time

## 8 Officer Reports

### 8.1 Minor Grants Program and Emergency Relief Fund 2025-26 Monthly Report

**Final Report Destination:** Council  
**Paper Type:** For Decision  
**Author:** Coordinator Community Partnerships and Inclusion, Marni Ford  
**Manager:** Manager Community Strengthening, Kerry Jansons  
**Executive:** Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

#### SUMMARY

This report summarises the grant applications recommended for approval in August 2025 for the 2025-26 Minor Grants Program and Emergency Relief Fund. All applications have been assessed against the criteria set out in the Knox City Council Community Grants Guidelines 2025-2026 (Guidelines).

Applications under the Minor Grants Program are limited to a maximum of \$2,500.00 within the current financial year.

Applications under the Emergency Relief Fund are limited to \$20,000.00 within the current financial year.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve nine applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of \$14,174.01 (excluding GST) as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title and Description	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
Coonara Community House	<b>Sunny Room Knitters' Group</b> Coonara Community House is seeking funding for their "Sunny Room Knitters" project, a diverse seniors group that meets weekly to create handmade items for people in need. Partnering with local charities, they are seeking assistance for the purchase of materials.	NA	\$2,500.00	\$2,240.00 (lesser amount due to GST and catering exceeding 20% of total grant amount)

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title and Description	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
Lysterfield Cricket Club	<b>Sun Protection</b> Lysterfield Cricket Club would like to purchase a high-quality unbranded portable marquee for use on game days to provide essential sun protection for their members and families. They are also launching a new junior girls' league and are seeking funding to contribute to the purchase of a dedicated kit bag for use by children who may not have access to their own gear.	\$619.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Footscape Inc.	<b>Foot Care Kits</b> Funding is being sought to provide 100 Foot Care Kits to vulnerable individuals, including homeless persons, First Nations People, and asylum seekers, through Knox affiliates such as EACH and Bolton Clarke. The kits promote daily self-care and improve foot health, helping prevent serious complications.	NA	\$2,500.00	\$2,272.73 (lesser amount due to GST)
Bayswater Senior Citizens Inc.	<b>Purchase of Laser Colour Printer/Toner</b> Funding is being sought for a colour printer to produce newsletters and flyers to distribute to their members.	\$87.00	\$784.00	\$784.00
Athletics Knox Board of Management Inc.	<b>Purchase of Synthetic Grass Sweeper</b> Funding is being sought for a synthetic grass sweeper to maintain newly installed synthetic surfaces at Knox Park Athletic Track. Leaf litter and debris from surrounding trees are impacting the facility.	\$277.50	\$850.00	\$850.00



Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title and Description	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
The Orchard Church of Christ Inc.	<b>Meeting The Community's Needs – Working Together</b> Funding is being sought to support The Well - a series of wellbeing workshops addressing issues like loneliness, grief, anxiety and healthy boundaries. Led by professional counsellors and health experts, the program aims to enhance emotional and mental wellbeing, with reduced costs for participants.	NA	\$2,500.00	\$2,272.73 (lesser amount due to GST)
Chime Choir (Choral Institute Melbourne Inc. [CHIME])	<b>Connecting Singing Communities Part 2</b> Funding to purchase a second iPad Pro and accessories to provide dedicated devices for both the Artistic Director and Accompanist. This will improve workflow, support complex musical arrangements and enhance performance preparation.	\$295.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Wantirna Retirement Village	<b>Vegetable Seedlings and Plants for Completion of Garden Beds</b> Funding is being sought to purchase vegetable seedlings and plants for their 26 new garden beds. This project provides an engaging activity that promotes wellbeing and connection amongst elderly residents, however, the quote that was received was high and officers recommend a partial contribution.	NA	\$2,500.00	\$454.55 (lesser amount due to GST). A partial contribution of \$500 (less GST) toward this project is recommended given the high quote provided. The group will be encouraged to work with the Knox Environmental Society to source their plants.

Minor Grants Program				
Applicant Name	Project Title and Description	10% Contribution for Equipment	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
Rowville Lions Club	<b>Venue Hire Fee</b> Venue Hire Fee for meeting place and renewal of volunteers personal accident/Public liability insurance and volunteers members fee	NA	\$1,820.51	\$300.00 (lesser amount due to funding venue hire only. Other items requested are operational expenses that form part of an organisation's reasonable operating budget [including insurance] are not eligible)
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$18,454.51</b>	<b>\$14,174.01</b>

2. Defer one application under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of \$2,500.00 as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program			
Applicant Name	Project Title	Reason for deferral	Amount Requested
SalamFest	<b>Coffee-and-Talks</b> This is a one-day cultural exchange event welcoming youth, seniors, women, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.	Seeking further information from applicant about when/where in Knox the event will be held.	\$2,500.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$2,500.00</b>

3. Refuse six applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of \$11,765.00 as detailed below:

Minor Grants Program			
Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Reason for Ineligibility
Australian Society of Graduate Tamils Inc.	The Tamil Forum and Competition	\$2,500.00	Event scheduled to take place prior to Council approval. Grant funds can't be used for retrospective payments or expenses undertaken before Council approval.
Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria	The Medicine of Music: Empowering People with Vision Loss	\$1,500.00	The organisation sits outside of Knox (Kooyong) and the project only benefits seven Knox residents.
Wantirna Tennis Club Inc.	Instant Hot Water Dispenser for Club House kitchen	\$920.00	Not eligible as hot water units are the responsibility of the user group, as per Council's Annual License Agreement.
Kilsyth South Baptist Church	Purchase of Coffee Machine Accessories for their coffee van	\$2,500.00	Operational expense that forms part of an organisation's reasonable operating budget. Organisation is based outside of Knox and could not demonstrate a significant benefit to Knox residents.
Radio Eastern FM 98.1	Office refurbishment for all abilities access	\$2,500.00	Not enough benefit to Knox residents demonstrated. Office is not located in Knox.
Rowville Eagles Soccer Club	Funding is being sought to upgrade its outdated Point of Sale (POS) system.	\$1,845.00	Whilst the POS will be used predominantly for their canteen, it will also be used in their bar where they sell alcohol. As per Council's Community Grants Guidelines, Council can not fund items that support the consumption of alcohol.
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$11,765.00</b>	

4. Note that should the recommended Minor Grants be approved by Council, the remaining budget for 2025-26 will be \$129,482.16 after GST adjustments.
5. Approve four applications under the Emergency Relief Fund for a total of \$59,377.28 (excluding GST) as detailed below:

Emergency Relief Fund				
Applicant Name	Project Title	Co-Contribution from Organisation	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
Knox Infolink	<b>Knox Infolink Emergency Relief Program</b> Funding is being sought to provide essential support to individuals and families in crisis. Grant funding will supply food, hygiene items, clothing, transport and communication support, and homelessness aid. This practical assistance helps people find some stability in their lives and access further help during times of financial stress or housing insecurity.	Total project cost \$390,390.00, including \$302,890.00 volunteer hours in-kind.	\$19,315.00	\$17,559.09 (lesser amount due to GST)
Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc.	<b>Emergency Bedding and other Manchester</b> Funding is being sought to provide new bedding and manchester items such as pillows, doonas, sheets, towels, and bathmats to individuals and families in crisis. Supplying clean, warm bedding supports health, dignity and allows clients to prioritise other essential living expenses.	NA	\$6,000.00	\$5,454.55 (lesser amount due to GST)
Feed One Feed All (FOFA)	<b>Reducing Food Insecurity for Families in Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah</b> Funding is being sought to provide 8,000 free, nutritious meals to vulnerable residents in Knox. FOFA's meals support health, dignity, and daily function for individuals and families facing hardship.	Total project cost \$155,000.00, including \$55,000 contribution from donations and fundraising.	\$20,000.00	\$18,181.82 (lesser amount due to GST)

Emergency Relief Fund				
Applicant Name	Project Title	Co-Contribution from Organisation	Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Amount Recommended (excl. GST)
The Salvation Army (Ferntree Gully Branch)	<b>The Pantry (Extended Food Relief) (Deferred from July Meeting)</b> Funding is being sought to expand its emergency relief services in Knox by providing fresh meals, food parcels, pantry supplies, warm clothing and emergency relief. With a 50% rise in demand, the grant will also support the purchasing of two additional fridges to help store fresh meals to help families facing hardship, food insecurity and rising living and medical costs.	Total project cost \$40,000, with an organisational contribution of \$20,000	\$20,000.00	\$18,181.82 (lesser amount due to GST)
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$65,315.00</b>	<b>\$59,377.28</b>

6. Note that should the recommended grants be approved by Council, the remaining Emergency Relief Fund budget for 2025-26 will be \$22,440.90 after GST adjustments.

## 1. DISCUSSION

### 1.1 Minor Grants Program

#### 1.1.1 Background – Minor Grants Program

The Minor Grants Program provides a pool of grant funding that can respond monthly to requests for small amounts of funding to assist with short term, one-off projects or initiatives that are relatively minor in nature.

The objective of the Minor Grants Program is to be an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

It operates under the principles of other Knox Council grants programs to ensure:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups will be encouraged;
- The grant process will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- The grant process will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Community Grants Guidelines (approved in May 2025), to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

The Guidelines and Council's Grant Framework Policy set out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

In accordance with the Guidelines, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, for Council's approval.

This report presents to Council the recommendations for recent Minor Grant applications in accordance with the Guidelines.

#### **1.1.2 Applications Recommended for Approval – Minor Grants Program**

Sixteen applications have been assessed this month, requesting grants totaling \$32,719.51 (including GST). Of the 16 applications, nine are recommended for approval. A summary of the projects recommended is in Attachment 1.

#### **1.1.3 Applications Recommended for Deferral – Minor Grants Program**

One application is recommended for deferral to the September 2025 Mid-Month Meeting of Council as we await further information regarding their application:

- SalamFest for their coffee-and-talks project. This is a one-day cultural exchange event welcoming youth, seniors, women, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds. We are seeking additional information about when/where in Knox the event will be held.

This group will be encouraged to provide the additional information prior to the deadline for the September 2025 Mid-Month Meeting of Council.

#### **1.1.4 Applications Recommended for Refusal – Minor Grants Program**

Six applications are recommended for refusal, requesting grants totaling \$11,765.00 including:

- Australian Society of Graduate Tamils Inc. for their Tamil Forum and Competition. This event is due to take place in July, prior to Council approval and is therefore ineligible per the Guidelines, which states retrospective payments or expenses for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval won't be funded.
- Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria for their online music quiz program. The organisation is based outside of Knox and hasn't demonstrated enough benefit to Knox residents, with the Guidelines stating organisations, projects or programs outside Knox won't be funded unless they offer clear benefits to Knox residents.
- Wantirna Tennis Club Inc. for their request to fund a new instant hot water dispenser. As part of Council's Annual License Agreement with Tennis Clubs hot water units are listed as the responsibility of the user group.
- The Kilsyth South Baptist Church, located outside Knox, operates a mobile coffee van. Funding is sought for a coffee tamp master to support volunteer baristas in producing coffee efficiently and safely, along with other utensils to improve hygiene and service speed. The Guidelines state that operating expenses that usually form part of an organisation's reasonable operating budget won't be funded. This organisation is also based outside of Knox.
- Radio Eastern FM 98.1 requested funding to refurbish their office and reception area to cater for volunteers with mobility needs. The organisation is based outside of Knox and

hasn't demonstrated a benefit to Knox residents, with the Guidelines stating organisations, projects or programs outside Knox won't be funded unless they offer clear benefits to Knox residents.

- Rowville Eagles Soccer Club are requesting funding to upgrade its outdated Point of Sale (POS) system, which currently hinders operations due to frequent breakdowns, limited functionality and poor integration. A modern system will improve sales management, customer service and financial reporting. The POS will be used in their kiosk/canteen, where they sell alcohol as part of their liquor license. As per Council's Community Grants Guidelines, Council can not fund items that support the consumption of alcohol.

#### **1.1.5 Applications Recommended for Withdrawal – Minor Grants Program**

One application was deferred at the July 2025 Mid-Month Meeting of Council from Knox Infolink. This group is no longer wishing to proceed with this application and has requested it be withdrawn.

### **1.2 Emergency Relief Fund**

#### **1.2.1 Background – Emergency Relief Fund**

The Emergency Relief Fund addresses short-term, essential support needs for Knox residents by providing better support to local organisations that provide these services. This includes food, bedding, clothing, vouchers, medication and other vital services that address immediate and essential needs of individuals requiring support in Knox.

It operates under the same principles as other Knox Council grants programs to ensure:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups will be encouraged;
- The grant process will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- The grant process will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Community Grants Guidelines.

The Guidelines and Council's Grant Framework Policy set out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

In accordance with the Guidelines, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, for Council's approval.

This report presents to Council the recommendations for recent Emergency Relief Fund applications in accordance with the Guidelines.

#### **1.2.2 Applications Recommended for Approval – Emergency Relief Fund**

Four applications have been assessed this month, requesting grants totaling \$65,315.00 (including GST). Of the four applications, all are recommended for approval. A summary of the projects recommended is as follows:

- Knox Infolink's Emergency Relief program provides essential support to individuals and families in crisis. Grant funding will supply food, hygiene items, clothing, transport and communication support, and homelessness aid. This practical assistance helps people find some stability in their lives and access further help during times of financial stress or housing insecurity.
- Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc. (EERN) seeks funding to provide new bedding and manchester items such as pillows, doonas, sheets, towels, and bathmats to individuals and families in crisis. Supplying clean, warm bedding supports health, dignity and allows clients to prioritise other essential living expenses.
- Feed One Feed All (FOFA) seeks funding to provide 8,000 free, nutritious meals to vulnerable residents in Knox. FOFA's meals support health, dignity, and daily function for individuals and families facing hardship.
- The Salvation Army (Ferntree Gully branch) seeks funding to expand its emergency relief services in Knox by providing food, warm clothing, chemist and petrol vouchers. With a 50% rise in demand, support includes two additional fridges and pantry supplies to help families facing hardship, food insecurity and rising living and medical costs.

Application details are provided in Attachment 2.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement is undertaken with organisations in relation to their grant applications whenever possible and if necessary, to clarify details regarding their applications prior to Council's consideration.

Advice or information may be sought from officers across Council in relation to either the applying organisation or the proposed project, or both, if considered necessary.

The Guidelines specify assessment can occur by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, and make recommendation for Council's determination.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Minor Grants Program allows Council to respond promptly to requests from Knox-based community groups for small amounts of funding to assist a variety of community-based programs, projects or activities. Council's Minor Grants are a simple and streamlined source of funding that can make a significant difference for local community organisations in need of short-term, specific purpose assistance.

The Emergency Relief Fund addresses short-term, essential support needs for Knox residents by providing better support to local organisations that provide these services. This includes food, bedding, clothing, vouchers, medication and other vital services that address immediate and essential needs of individuals requiring support in Knox.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.



**5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There are no environmental considerations associated with this report.

**6. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS****6.1 Budget – Minor Grants Program**

The approval of Minor Grants is managed within Council's adopted budget. The 2025-26 budget provides \$156,696.00 for the Minor Grants Program.

Funding commitments to date are summarised below:

<b>Yearly Summary 2025-26</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved at Council Meeting (Excluding GST)</b>
July	\$13,039.83
August	\$
September	\$
October	\$
November	\$
December	\$
January	\$
February	\$
March	\$
April	\$
May	\$
<b>Totals (Year to Date)</b>	<b>\$13,039.83</b>

Recommended applications for the August period total \$14,174.01 (excluding GST).

If approved as recommended, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2025-26 will total \$129,482.16 (excluding GST).

**6.2 Budget – Emergency Relief Fund**

The approval of the Emergency Relief Fund is managed within Council's adopted budget. The 2025-26 budget provides \$100,000.00 for the Fund.

Funding commitments to date are summarised below:

<b>Yearly Summary 2025-26</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved at Council Meeting (Excluding GST)</b>
July	\$18,181.82
August	\$
September	\$
October	\$
November	\$
December	\$
January	\$
February	\$
March	\$
April	\$
May	\$

<b>Yearly Summary 2025-26</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved at Council Meeting (Excluding GST)</b>
<b>Totals (Year to Date)</b>	<b>\$18,181.82</b>

Recommended applications for the August period total \$59,377.28 (excluding GST).

If approved as recommended, the remaining Emergency Relief Fund budget for 2025-26 will total \$22,440.90 (excluding GST).

## **7. RISKS**

Any risks associated with administering the Minor Grant Program and Emergency Relief Fund are managed through the implementation of Council's Grant Framework Policy and the Guidelines. All Minor and Emergency Relief Fund grants must be acquitted, and evidence of expenditure must be provided by the organisation.

The Guidelines and Council's Grant Framework Policy set out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

In accordance with the Guidelines, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, for Council or delegate approval as appropriate.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources**

- Strategy 1.3 Local businesses and our economy are strong and resilient and there are increased employment opportunities through development, attracting investment, embracing technology and innovation, and advocacy.
- Strategy 1.4 Access to affordable and nutritious food is enhanced through advocacy and working in partnership with relevant organisations to raise awareness and promote available community programs.
- Strategy 1.5 Our community's health and wellbeing is improved through proactive planning, delivery, partnerships and advocacy that enable access to services, education and programs.

### **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity**

- Strategy 2.1 Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.
- Strategy 2.2 Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.
- Strategy 2.3 Our community is supported to thrive during all stages of life through the promotion and provision of services, advocacy and partnerships with local service providers.
- Strategy 2.4 There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

### **Leading, listening and governing responsibly**

- Strategy 4.1 Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

- Strategy 4.2 Our diverse community is informed and has opportunities to participate and provide feedback through clear and meaningful communication and engagement,
- Strategy 4.3 Council services are efficient and optimised through ongoing improvement, and focused investment in innovation, technology and capability.
- Strategy 4.4 The changing needs of our community are met through informed policy and strategy that maximises value, collaboration and partnerships with other councils and local organisations.
- Strategy 4.5 Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

**Being a strong voice for safety**

- Strategy 5.3 Our community is more secure, connected and feel less isolated through planning, partnerships, advocacy and targeted support for our most vulnerable.
- Strategy 5.4 People feel safe in their homes and in the community through the development of partnerships, planning and promotion of programs, services and education that focus on connection, safety and respect.
- Strategy 5.5 Our community is resilient in the face of emergencies through planning, education, emergency response and support.

**9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

**10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

**11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Minor Grants Program Application Extraction August 2025 REVISED (2) [8.1.1 - 11 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - FINAL Emergency Relief Grant Program Application Extraction August 2 (2) [8.1.2 - 9 pages]

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP007

Attachment 1

### Coonara Community House

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP007
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Coonara Community House
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	'Sunny Room Knitters' group
<b>Project Start Date</b>	28/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	28/08/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>Coonara's 'Sunny Room Knitters' group is a diverse Seniors group that gathers each Wednesday to knit for those in need. Each talented member enjoys a routine of friendships, teamwork and an opportunity to make a difference. Working in partnership with The Basin Salvation Army our group take pride in knitting over 40 blankets, beanies and scarves per month. They also partner with Rose Street Op Shop in Upper Ferntree Gully to deliver handmade knitted baby items.</p> <p>The group often rely on the kindness of the community to donate wool, however this is not always reliable or viable and they often have a shortage or in some cases run out of supplies. Some members use their own money just so the group can continue to meet.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>There are 22 Members attending 'Sunny Room Knitters' group including one volunteer team leader who enjoy routine, a familiar, reliable and safe space to share companionship. An opportunity to work together to achieve a rewarding outcome of providing knitted items for vulnerable community members. Coonara supports these members who are often socially isolated and extends further opportunities to join other social and recreational groups within our house. Often a gateway to creating lifelong friendships, happiness and contentment for many.</p> <p>Overall a feeling of worthiness and being able to give back builds a strong sense of belonging.</p> <p>Other benefits include:  Approximately 480 knitted items donated each year.  Seniors have the opportunity to stay on for Community Lunch providing a 2 course nutritious meal every Wednesday.  Opportunities to join other support /social groups, events and activities.  A wealth of resources and services available if needed.  Be part of an active community.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	500	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	480	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Knox City Council Minor Grant	\$ 2,500.00	Materials (acrylic wool and catering)	\$ 2,500.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP014

### Lysterfield Cricket Club

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP014
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Lysterfield Cricket Club
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	"Lysterfield Beavers Junior Cricket – Sun Protection and Girls League Project"
<b>Project Start Date</b>	01/09/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/04/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>We are seeking funding to purchase a high-quality, unbranded marquee for use by the Lysterfield Cricket Club. The marquee will provide essential sun protection particularly for our junior players, volunteers, and spectators during training sessions and match days held at Lakesfield Reserve.</p> <p>We are also excited to be launching a new junior girls' league this season and are seeking funding to purchase a dedicated kit bag, valued at approximately \$600. This kit will include essential equipment such as a bat, balls, protective gear, and helmets for use by children who may not have access to their own gear.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>This project will create a safer and more inclusive environment for local families by providing all weather protection during cricket activities. It will also support subsidised uniforms and equipment for families doing it tough. Overall, this project will strengthen community connections and ensure that more kids in Knox have the chance to enjoy the benefits of playing cricket, being part of a team and a community.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	150	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 3,119.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	99%	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00

Income Description	Income Amount	Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Council Grant	\$ 2,500.00	Marquee (inc GST)	\$ 2,035.00
Co-contribution from Club to Marque and Kit Bag	\$619.00	Kit bag for new Girls league	\$ 1,084.00
Total	\$3119.00	Total	\$3119.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP031

### Footscape Inc.

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP031
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Footscape Inc.
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Foot Care Kits
<b>Project Start Date</b>	01/09/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/09/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>Footscape distributes Foot Care Kits through affiliate organisations to empower Homeless Persons, First Nations persons and Asylum Seekers through daily self-care practices and improved foot health. Such individuals that confront complex health needs have difficulty prioritising their foot health despite the risk of problems, including diabetes complications.</p> <p>Footscape's provision of high quality new/second hand footwear, new socks and foot care kits greatly improves the ability of project affiliate organisations to support clients as they work to achieve their goals. Nonetheless, demand for Footscape material aid items has been at record levels over the past twelve months. In so doing material aid inventory, including foot care kit resources, are rapidly being exhausted. Given current cost of living pressures continue to result in increasing numbers of requests Footscape is seeking urgent support to ensure a supply of foot care kits can be maintained with Knox affiliates including EACH and Bolton Clarke.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>Homeless Persons, First Nations persons and Asylum Seekers confronting complex health needs have difficulty prioritising their foot health despite the risk of problems, including diabetes complications. Nonetheless painful foot problems affecting such persons are accentuated as individuals may be forced to walk long distances upon poor footwear and socks.</p> <p>Footscape's provision of high quality new/second hand footwear, new socks and foot care kits greatly improves the ability of project affiliate organisations to support clients as they work to achieve their goals. At the time of preparing this application Footscape has distributed an extraordinary 14,000 pairs of new/second hand footwear, 96,000 pairs of new socks and 6,000 foot care kits to recipients of care at sixty affiliate organisations including EACH and Bolton Clarke.</p> <p>Affiliate organisations recognise that Footscape material aid orientated projects are helping to address health inequity by providing essential resources, delivering social justice and empowering affecting individuals.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	100	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	100	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Council grant	\$ 2,500.00	Foot Care Kits (x100 kits at \$25 each. Please note: As per recent orders through Briggate Medical Company - see attached invoice - the average kit price is \$25)	\$ 2,500.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP038

### Bayswater Senior Citizens Inc

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP038
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Bayswater Senior Citizens Inc
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Purchase of Laser Colour Printer and Toner
<b>Project Start Date</b>	12/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/08/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	Bayswater seniors have identified a need for the use of a colour printer for our Newsletters/Flyers to enable us to promote our activities/events to our members and to the wider community.		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	Provision of an extended social and wellbeing program for seniors in the Knox environs and an improved method of promoting the activities provided by the club to the over 50s demographic within the Knox Community.		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	150	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 871.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	130	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 784.00

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Council grant	\$ 784.00	Printer & cartridge	\$ 784.00
10% Contribution	\$ 87.00	Additional costs (training on equipment, paper etc)	\$ 87.00



**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP042

### Athletics Knox Board of Management Inc.

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP042
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Athletics Knox Board of Management Inc.
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Purchase of Synthetic Grass Sweeper
<b>Project Start Date</b>	01/09/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	31/10/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	Knox Park Athletic Track recently underwent a major redevelopment which included the installation of approximately 1000 sqm of synthetic grass around the running track perimeter, the long and triple jump competition area and 4 shade sail marshall areas. In order to properly maintain the synthetic grass it has become apparent that a synthetic grass sweeper is required to help keep the grass free of leaf matter, small tree branches and general debris. There are numerous pin oak trees and a number of pine trees growing within the venue that are creating this maintenance issue. A Roll & Comb 602QC sweeper machine has been identified as the best solution to fixing the problem.		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	A properly maintained venue for the benefit of club members whilst training and weekly competition throughout the summer season. The venue also holds a number of school sports carnivals throughout the year Up to 90 carnivals involving around 50,000 competitors have been held in previous years. This includes a large number of schools within the Knox municipality.		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	500	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 1,127.50
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	450	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 850.00

Income Description	Income Amount	Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
Council Grant	\$ 850.00	Roll & Comb 602QWC Sweeper	\$ 1,050.50
Club Contribution	\$ 277.50	Freight	\$ 77.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP045

### The Orchard Church of Christ Inc.

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP045
<b>Organisation Name</b>	The Orchard Church of Christ Inc.
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Meeting The Community's Needs - Working Together
<b>Project Start Date</b>	27/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	26/08/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>Tending to our wellbeing is one of the best ways to live a full and abundant life. When our inner world is unattended to, our outer world is never quite as rich. Through workshops at The Well (our name for the program), we hope to provide help and guidance to enable the participants to address and develop skills to overcome issues in their lives such as loneliness, grief, anxiety, lost connections, setting boundaries in their home and workplace, promoting healthy living.</p> <p>The grant funding would allow us to conduct workshops with professional counsellors, health experts with reduced cost to the participants.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>We believe that The Well programs can make a difference in people's lives. We will run targeted events addressing observed and revealed needs. The participants will complete the workshops with a newly discovered resilience and the ability to recognise triggers that had previously caused concerns or issues. A better society is our aim - where people will have the skills and confidence to face up to life's challenges and overcome the fears and constraints that had previously held them back from achieving a productive and purposeful life.</p> <p>Healthy, productive members of our community will require less medical intervention and increase productivity in the workforce / community.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	200	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 3,200.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	185	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Council grant	\$ 2,500.00	Presenter fees	\$ 2,500.00
Event ticket sales	\$ 700.00	Venue hire, refreshments	\$ 700.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP046

### Chime Choir (Choral Institute Melbourne Inc. (CHIME))

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP046
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Chime Choir (Choral Institute Melbourne Inc. (CHIME))
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Connecting Singing Communities Part 2
<b>Project Start Date</b>	18/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	31/12/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>Grant proposal “Connecting Singing Communities Part 2” seeks support for Chime to purchase a second iPad and accessories (cover, screen protector, stylii, software) for the same reasons outlined in detail in successful Grant Application No. 2425-MGP118.</p> <p>Sharing one iPad between Chime’s Artistic Director/Accompanist has not worked logistically and to alleviate this situation Chime seeks support for a second iPad such that the Artistic Director/Accompanist each have their own dedicated iPad. Chime recognised that sharing one iPad between two would likely be cumbersome/unworkable but the funding boundary of Minor Grants (&lt; 3K\$ in 2024-25) did not allow for the purchase of two iPads in the one grant.</p> <p>The request is for the purchase of a second more creatively powerful iPad Pro (greater storage, higher RAM) and accessories (case, screen, protector, styli, software) singularly dedicated to the Artistic Director’s more complex activities in choral/music arrangement/performance.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>Community benefit was detailed in Application No. 2425-MGP118 and its Acquittal.</p> <p>It supports Chime’s transition to a paperless music storage platform/system that can cope with a broad music portfolio for use in rehearsals/performances by its Artistic Director for enabling capability development, broader community engagement, greater flexibility wrt venues, joint concerts etc. and alleviates the cost imposition of such a significant purchase on individual choristers.</p> <p>Chime has delivered two Connecting Singing Communities concerts (the first, with Southern Voices at Wantirna College, the second, with the Knox Wind Symphony/Box Hill Brass Band, at MLC) which have resulted in increased audience sizes (~20-30%)/social media (facebook/Instagram) posts/interactions. It has two more planned.</p> <p>The above benefits the Knox community by raising the profile of Chime and the Knox Wind Symphony orchestra both of whom are headquartered in Knox thus reinforcing that Knox is supportive of the arts by connecting such communities.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	50 + audiences (150-300)	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 2,795.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	15 in choir	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Council Grant	\$ 2,400.00	iPad Pro	\$ 2,400.00
Council Grant	\$ 70.00	Screen Protector	\$ 70.00
Council Grant	\$ 30.00	Case	\$ 30.00
Chime Contribution	\$ 55.00	Case	\$ 55.00
Chime Contribution	\$ 200.00	Styli	\$ 200.00
Chime Contribution	\$ 40.00	Software	\$ 40.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025**2526-MGP049****Wantirna Retirement Village**

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP049
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Wantirna Retirement Village
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	Vegetable Seedlings and plants for completion of Garden beds
<b>Project Start Date</b>	30/09/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/09/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	We would like to purchase vegetables for our new gardeners to grow in their safe and updated garden beds		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	togetherness and coming together with an agenda that will benefit all of our residents i.e. growing food for the community and showing and sharing our produce with other organizations if successful		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	200	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	200	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 2,500.00

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
council grant	\$ 2,500.00	Seedling & Plants	\$ 2,500.00

**Minor Grant Program Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-MGP047

### Rowville Lions Club

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-MGP047
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Rowville Lions Club
<b>Grant Program</b>	Minor Grants Program

<b>Project Title</b>	This application is intended to request from you a grant to support our club to pay Venue Hire Fee for meeting place and renewal of volunteers personal accident/Public liability insurance and volunteers members fee
<b>Project Start Date</b>	22/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/08/2025

<b>Request Details</b>	This application is intended to request from you a grant to support our club to pay Venue Hire Fee for meeting place and renewal of volunteers personal accident/Public liability insurance and volunteers members fee. We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at St.Simon Parish Community Centre Rowville. We are paying \$25.00 every month. We are non- profit organisation and we have 17 volunteers who are actively working and delivering acute services to our community.		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	Monthly members meeting to discuss our projects and making plans to help our local community. Our main fundraising is that monthly BBQ at Bunnings Scoresby , selling Christmas cakes/puddings and actively participating with Knox council community events. Our major projects are to support the William Angliss Hospital, Monash Children Hospital, Sponsoring multiple student achievement awards for many of our local Schools and also helping our local food banks/ emergency relief		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	10000	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$ 1,820.51
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	10000	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 1,820.51

<b>Income Description</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
KCC Grant	\$ 300.00	Venue Hire	\$ 300.00
KCC Grant	\$ 1,226.92	renewal of public liability insurance	\$ 1,226.92
KCC Grant	\$ 293.59	renewal of volunteers membership and personal accident insurance	\$ 293.59

## Emergency Relief Grant Applications

August 2025

**2526-ERF005****Attachment 2****Knox Infolink**

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-ERF005
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Knox Infolink
<b>Grant Program</b>	Emergency Relief Fund

<b>Project Title</b>	Knox Infolink Emergency Relief Program
<b>Project Start Date</b>	01/09/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	31/08/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>The Knox Infolink Emergency Relief program is a vital service supporting vulnerable individuals and families across the Knox community. This grant funding will be used to purchase essential emergency relief items tailored to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing financial hardship, housing insecurity, struggles with addiction, or other crises. These items include nutritious food—both non-perishable staples and fresh produce—personal care products to support hygiene and dignity, and targeted aid for those experiencing homelessness, such as swags, sleeping bags, and single-use food items. Additional support includes clothing and school-related assistance, transport aid through MYKI and petrol vouchers, communication support via SIM cards and phone credit, and pharmaceutical assistance to ensure continuity of care. Each item is selected to provide practical, compassionate support that helps individuals stabilize their circumstances and access further assistance. This funding is critical to maintaining our capacity to respond promptly and effectively to growing community needs.</p>
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>Additional funding for Knox Infolink's Emergency Relief (ER) program will significantly strengthen our ability to respond immediately to growing community need. Operating weekdays from 8am–3pm (excluding Wednesdays), Knox Infolink offers free, drop-in support—no appointments or waitlists. A key feature of our approach is the provision of immediate assistance, whether breakfast, and/or food parcels, and/or material aid, while building relationships of trust and wrap around support services around the individual/family.</p> <p>The ER funding will allow Knox Infolink to meet rising demand driven by cost-of-living pressures. It ensures that we can continue to provide immediate, tangible assistance to every person who walks through our doors seeking support. The benefit to the community is profound: reduced food insecurity, improved health and wellbeing, and stronger social connections. Increasing available ER resources at Knox Infolink, helps create a more resilient, inclusive Knox community where no one is left behind in times of crisis.</p>
<b>Demonstration of need</b>	<p>Knox Infolink has been a trusted provider of emergency relief and community support in Knox for over 33 years. Demand for our services continues to rise sharply, with nearly 50% of clients in 2024–25 seeking support for the first time. Emergency relief interviews increased by 25%, reflecting growing complexity in community needs.</p>

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**

August 2025

	Despite operating with only 3 FTE staff and a dedicated volunteer team, our resources are stretched. In the past year, we distributed the equivalent of 78,956 meals—a 26% increase—and over 11,750 material aid items, up 22% from the previous year. The most significant growth was in high-cost supports: communication rose by 114%, transport by 44%, and rough sleeping items by 38%. These figures highlight escalating financial stress and housing instability in our community. Additional funding is urgently needed to sustain and expand our capacity to respond effectively and compassionately to this growing demand.		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	5200	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$390,390.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	5100	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$19,315.00

**Total Project Income and Expenditure**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
ER Grant	\$14,170.00	Food & personal consumable items (non-perishable & fresh food, toiletries, cleaning items etc)	\$14,170.00
CISVic/DSS Grant	\$47,830.00	Food & personal consumable items (non-perishable & fresh food, toiletries, cleaning items etc)	\$47,830.00
ER Grant	\$230.00	Food packaging (Containers and Hamper bags)	\$230.00
CISVic/DSS Grant	\$770.00	Food packaging (Containers and Hamper bags)	\$770.00
ER Grant	\$2,745.00	Transport support (PTV and Petrol vouchers)	\$2,745.00
CISVic/DSS Grant	\$9,255.00	Transport support (PTV and Petrol vouchers)	\$9,255.00
ER Grant	\$915.00	Medications/Prescriptions	\$915.00
Public donations	\$3,085.00	Medications/Prescriptions	\$3,085.00
ER Grant	\$915.00	Communication support (Phone top ups, SIM)	\$915.00
Magistrate's Court Fund	\$3,085.00	Communication support (Phone top ups, SIM)	\$3,085.00
ER Grant	\$340.00	Clothing (Inc. State School Relief gap fees)	\$340.00
Public Donations	\$1,160.00	Clothing (Inc. State School Relief gap fees)	\$1,160.00
StreetSmart Grant	\$3,000.00	Homeless specific items (Swags, tents, etc)	\$3,000.00
Volunteer time (In-Kind donation)	\$302,890.00	Emergency Relief Volunteer Interviewers (7 volunteers per day, 4 days per week, 50 weeks per year)	\$302,890.00



**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025**What specifically will the grant fund**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Food & personal consumable items (non-perishable & fresh food, toiletries, cleaning items etc)	\$14,170.00
Food packaging (Containers and Hamper bags)	\$230.00
Transport support (PTV and Petrol vouchers)	\$2,745.00
Medications/Prescriptions	\$915.00
Communication support (Phone top ups, SIM)	\$915.00
Clothing (Inc. State School Relief gap fees)	\$340.00
<b>TOTAL TO BE FUNDED FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND</b>	<b>\$19,315.00</b>

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-ERF010

### Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-ERF010
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Eastern Emergency Relief Network
<b>Grant Program</b>	Emergency Relief Fund

<b>Project Title</b>	Emergency bedding and other Manchester
<b>Project Start Date</b>	19/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	30/06/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>New bedding/Manchester items are needed to give to clients when they collect emergency household items which often includes mattresses/bedframes. Bedding includes pillows, sheet sets, doonas, covers and blankets. Other Manchester items include towels and bathmats. As EERN assists both individuals and families, a variety of sizes in bedding are needed. Those clients referred to EERN cannot afford to purchase such items or to do so would cause greater financial hardship. Sometimes bedding that is donated is not fit for purpose and cannot be used. For health and hygiene reasons, EERN does not collect or distribute used pillows. Recent increases in cost-of-living expenses, means the cost of basic bedding and Manchester is getting beyond the reach of those living below the poverty line or in the lower socio-economic areas who are impacted by homelessness and other issues.</p>		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>Clients who access bedding and other Manchester including towels start off with clean products they can use straight away. The doonas we give out are selected to be the equivalent of 3 blankets minimum, so clients have warmth. Sleeping in warmth means better health outcomes. The clients who come through EERN are often homeless and have sourced housing through their support agencies. Being able to access free good quality items means they can use their income for essential expenditure to keep a roof over their heads and for food and medication. Being given this opportunity leads to greater social wellbeing and engagement in community.</p>		
<b>Demonstration of need</b>	<p>The community need is very high, and the benefit from the project is substantial. Statistical data kept by EERN shows the demand for our services has increased by 30% in 2 years. Using data compiled over the past few years, EERN annually on average distributes 1000 donated beds/mattresses. These are supplemented with an annual average of 700 pillows, 400 doonas and 640 sheet/doona sets. The level of need has been constant and is projected to increase due to an increase in rates of homelessness because of cost-of-living pressures. This can only impact those already in a precarious situation. Supplying quality Manchester means wellbeing is increased and health outcomes are better. Recipients can channel their funds into other essential areas like fresh food, medication and paying utilities.</p>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	5000	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$37,000.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	950	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$6,000.00

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025

**Total Project Income and Expenditure**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
City of Knox grant application submitted	\$6,000.00	emergency bedding	\$6,000.00
City of Whitehorse grant application submitted	\$5,800.00	emergency bedding	\$5,800.00
William Angliss Foundation grant application submitted	\$10,000.00	emergency bedding	\$10,000.00
StreetSmart - donation of single and double bed sheet kits x 360 kits	\$7,200.00	in kind donation of sheets and towels	\$7,200.00
Freemasons Community Foundation grant to be submitted	\$8,000.00	emergency bedding grant	\$8,000.00

**What specifically will the grant fund**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>
2 pack medium height pillows at 150 packs	\$1,980.00
Queen Bed sheet sets inc fitted sheet, 2 pillowcases and top sheet x 70 packs	\$2,380.00
Double Bed doonas - high warmth x 20	\$760.00
Queen size doonas x 20	\$880.00
<b>TOTAL TO BE FUNDED FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-ERF011

### Feed One Feed All Inc

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-ERF011
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Feed One Feed All Inc
<b>Grant Program</b>	Emergency Relief Fund

<b>Project Title</b>	Reducing Food Insecurity for Families in Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah
<b>Project Start Date</b>	01/11/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	31/10/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	<p>With increases in the cost of living, demand for food relief has jumped dramatically.</p> <p>FOFA is planning to provide roughly 60,000 meals to the most needy families in the Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah LGAs in FY 2025/6 so that they can at least start their days on an even keel with more affluent families.</p> <p>We are requesting a grant of \$20,000, which is roughly 13% of our proposed \$155,000 operating budget for 2025/6. This grant would assure that we would provide at least 8,000 meals into the Knox LGA, based on our estimated cost of \$2.50 per meal.</p>
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>We ensure a supply of at least 8,000 FREE meals into the Knox LGA.</p> <p>We believe in the principle that Food is a basic human requirement to allow people to perform at their best. Misuse or a shortage of food may result in students under performing at school or adults at work. People making bad choices in their diets may end up with chronic medical conditions in their future and become a burden on the state.</p> <p>By making the meals wholesome and nutritionally balanced, we ensure that our meals not only quell hunger, but are good for their health. Many older recipients only have one main meal a day. Others in palliative care need nutrients and have specialist meal preferences. FOFA provides a wide range of meals to meet most diets.</p> <p>Lastly, we add spices and visual condiments so recipients can see that meals are prepared for them as people.</p> <p><a href="https://youtu.be/KPAHLQ9zXM8">https://youtu.be/KPAHLQ9zXM8</a></p>
<b>Demonstration of need</b>	<p>There is a need for food relief in Knox.</p> <p>A Knox Emergency Task Force study has shown that between 2022 and 2023, demand for food relief in Knox jumped by 40%. "Food relief was once the reality for residents experiencing homelessness, unemployment or chronic health conditions. It supported people to handle unexpected events - a temporary job loss, a car breaking down or a short term illness. Now, a new demographic needs help. "source: Knox Emergency Task Force (pre-published report)</p>

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**

August 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empirical experience (evidenced by people contacting FOFA) that more people are doing it “tough” and need food assistance. Our meals are in high demand, and we can only fulfil a fraction of requests.</li> <li>• According to the Victorian Council of Social Services, roughly 11% of the population in our area are below the poverty line. (August 2023 analysis by VCOSS based on the Mapping Economic Disadvantage Report produced by NATSEM using ABS data) source: <a href="https://vcoss.org.au/cost-of-living/2023/08/povertymaps/">https://vcoss.org.au/cost-of-living/2023/08/povertymaps/</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	60000	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$155,000.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	20000	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$20,000.00

**Total Project Income and Expenditure**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Income Amount</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Expenditure Amount</b>
Knox ERF Grant	\$20,000.00	Production (Additional protein, veg, Containers)	\$51,000.00
Donations	\$30,000.00	Project Support (Repairs, Installations, Aprons etc)	\$17,800.00
Sales/Fund Raising	\$25,000.00	Admin/IT/Travel	\$4,400.00
Grants from other groups, LGAs	\$40,000.00	Small Eqpt	\$5,000.00
Grants from Benevolent Organisations	\$40,000.00	Marketing	\$2,800.00
		Contractor (The Food Affectionist)	\$40,000.00
		Outgoings (utilities, waste, rental)	\$34,000.00

**What specifically will the grant fund**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>
8000 Meals *Average cost to produce a frozen meal is \$2.50	\$20,000.00
<b>TOTAL TO BE FUNDED FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025

## 2526-ERF003

### The Salvation Army

<b>Application ID</b>	2526-ERF003
<b>Organisation Name</b>	The Salvation Army – Ferntree Gully Branch
<b>Grant Program</b>	Emergency Relief Fund

<b>Project Title</b>	The Pantry (Extended Food Relief)
<b>Project Start Date</b>	12/08/2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	31/07/2026

<b>Request Details</b>	Through this grant we will extend the practical assistance we provide to people in need within the Knox area which will include a wide range of grocery items, vegetables, bakery goods, warm clothing for people experiencing homelessness, such as scarves and beanies as well as assistance with petrol costs and chemist requirements. Do to this we need two additional fridges within The Pantry that we have established and assistance in purchasing vouchers as well as necessary foodstuff to stock The Pantry. We are a member of the KERN group in Knox and work closely with other ER providers and community groups within the City of Knox and have established collaborative partnerships with local traders and supermarkets who assist in supplying some foodstuffs free of charge. We also work closely with Centrelink, homelessness services and DV services to provide holistic assistance to those in need		
<b>Community Benefit</b>	With the increase in the cost of living there are increasing numbers of individuals and families that are experiencing food insecurity and we have seen evidence of parents skipping meals to make ends meet. We want to address the issue of food insecurity and help to alleviate the worst effects of poverty within our community by providing supplemental food to ensure that children and families maintain good health through nutritious food. This in turn benefits the whole community by enhancing community goodwill, reducing stress and anxiety and ensuring that all our citizens are able to get back on their feet and contribute to a good society.		
<b>Demonstration of need</b>	We currently provide emergency relief from our premises and we have witnessed a 50% increase in the number of individuals and families seeking assistance. This includes people experiencing homelessness who are able to access emergency foodstuff 24/7 from an External Pantry set up on our premises and individuals and families can attend the internal Pantry which is set up as a grocery store and helps to supplement their weekly grocery bill. We have also seen an increase in people seeking financial assistance to pay for pharmaceutical items that are not on the PBS and receive persistent requests from people seeking petrol vouchers to assist with general transport costs including taking children to school, weekly shopping, trips to doctors etc		
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	1000	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	\$40,000.00
<b>Knox Beneficiaries</b>	1000	<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$20,000.00

**Emergency Relief Grant Applications**  
August 2025

**Total Project Income and Expenditure**

Income Description	Income Amount	Expenditure Description	Expenditure Amount
MCV (Court funds) Grant	\$7,000.00	meat purchases	\$7,000.00
Organisational contribution	\$4,000.00	clothing and household goods to assist ER clients	\$4,000.00
Organisational contribution	\$3,200.00	Building maintenance costs, cleaning etc. ties gas, water, electricity	\$3,200.00
Organisational contribution	\$2,000.00	Utilities, gas, electricity, water etc.	\$2,000.00
Organisational Contribution	\$400.00	fuel costs associated with food pick ups	\$400.00
Organisational Contribution	\$700.00	Finance and admin	\$700.00
Organisational Costs	\$600.00	Postage/Telecommunications	\$600.00
Organisational Cost	\$400.00	Printing	\$400.00
Organisational Cost	\$1,000.00	packaging, bottles, containers for decanting goods	\$1,000.00
Organisational contribution	\$700.00	Contribution towards delivery of fridges	\$700.00
ERF Grant	\$20,000.00	Commercial Fridge	\$1,600.00
		Fridge/freezer	\$1,400.00
		Chemist vouchers	\$600.00
		Petrol Vouchers	\$800.00
		Grocery items	\$15,600.00

**What specifically will the grant fund**

Expenditure	Amount
Commercial Fridge	\$1,600.00
Fridge/freezer	\$1,400.00
Chemist vouchers	\$600.00
Petrol Vouchers	\$800.00
Grocery items	\$15,600.00
<b>TOTAL TO BE FUNDED FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND</b>	<b>\$20,000.00</b>

## 8.2 Council Plan Progress Report Q4 2024-25

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Noting
<b>Author:</b>	Corporate Planning and Reporting Officer, Rod Beecham
<b>Manager:</b>	Acting Manager Strategy and Transformation, Gail Power
<b>Executive:</b>	Acting Director Customer and Performance, Liesl Westberry

### SUMMARY

The Quarterly Council Plan Progress Report for the period ended 30 June 2025 is presented for consideration and noting.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to note the Quarterly Performance Report for the period ended 30 June 2025 (Attachment 1).

### 1. DISCUSSION

The provision of the Quarterly Performance Report ensures that associated processes are accountable, transparent and responsible to ensure sound financial management and transparent reporting on Council Plan initiatives. The Council Plan Quarterly Progress Report provides an overview of how we performed in the final quarter of the final year of the Council Plan 2021-2025.

#### **Council Plan Quarterly Performance Report**

The Council Plan 2021-25 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) was adopted on 25 October 2021 and outlines Council's contribution to the achievement of the Community Vision.

The Council Plan included several four-year initiatives, which were broken down into annual milestones. These are described in the format "Initiative – Milestone". Delivery against these milestones is monitored through quarterly progress reports. These are not comprehensive reports on all the Council's activities: they identify the progress the Council has made towards the achievement of the Key Directions of the Council Plan and, ultimately, of the Community Vision.

Attachment 1 provides the Council Plan 2021-25 Year 4 Quarterly Progress Report for the fourth quarter of 2024-25. Also included are the Council Plan Indicators, which tell us whether the work we are doing is contributing to positive change in our community. The progress updates and Council Plan Indicators will be included in Council's 2024-25 Annual Report.

Progress targets are set against each initiative by quarter based on when key milestones for the year will be completed.

Of the 35 initiatives included in 2024-25 (Year 4) of the Council Plan:

- 29 initiatives were completed, and
- 6 initiatives are behind schedule.



The initiatives behind schedule are:

- CP 1.1.1: Work with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils to deliver key initiatives of the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy – Undertake stakeholder engagement on the draft Spatial Plan for the Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) and seek Council endorsement of the final plan.

This initiative has not been achieved by 30 June 2025 due to delays in the procurement process in engaging a consultant to assist in the development of the Spatial Plan.

- CP 1.1.4: Continue to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of future economic development initiatives – Finalise and endorse the economic strategic plan to inform the future work program and priorities of Knox's Economic Development service.

The finalisation of the strategic plan has been delayed due to other service priorities including finalisation of the Boronia grant funded projects.

- CP 2.1.2: Commence review of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 - Undertake community and stakeholder public engagement on a draft Issues and Opportunities report to inform the preparation of a new or revised Knox Housing Strategy. (Major Initiative 2024-25)

Commencement of the project has been delayed due to various State Government planning reforms that impact the development of a housing strategy and distribution of State Government led housing targets.

- CP 2.2.4: Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal program - Deliver Stage 1 of the Green Spine Corridor project within the Boronia Renewal Strategy.

Council received a Memorandum of Authorisation (MOA) from VicRoads with extremely limited day-work hour conditions. This has delayed completion of the works on-site.

- CP 2.2.5: Progress implementation of the Knox Central program - Develop an Expression of Interest package for prospective developers of the development of the Knox Central precinct land.

The timing for an Expression of Interest has been deferred while a needs analysis for future civic and community facilities, along with community engagement, is completed.

- CP 2.2.13: Finalise and implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy - Undertake public exhibition of the planning scheme amendment associated with implementation of the Bayswater Renewal Strategy and refer and report to Council on the outcomes of the public exhibition process. (Major Initiative 2024-25)

It was initially thought that Bayswater Activity Centre may form part of the activity centres nominated by State Government for future planning under new planning controls. Drafting of the package of planning controls to form part of an authorisation request to the Minister for Planning to commence the planning scheme amendment process was consequently delayed. It has now been confirmed that the activity centre has not been nominated.

This is the final quarter of delivery for the Council Plan 2021-25 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) which has now been superseded by the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. Of the 35 initiatives listed in the Council Plan 2021-25, 29 have been completed and 6 initiatives are behind schedule. The initiatives not yet completed will continue to be delivered until finalised through Service Plans. Future reporting will focus on the initiatives identified in the Annual Budget 2025-2026, delivering on the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

This report does not necessitate community consultation.

Significant community engagement was incorporated into the development of the Council Plan 2021-25 and the Community Plan 2021-31, which incorporates Community Vision. The initiatives identified in the Council Plan 2021-25 Year 4 Quarterly Progress Report (2024-25) support the delivery of the Council Plan 2021-25 and contribute to the achievement of Community Vision.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct social implications arising from this report. Several initiatives within Year 4 (2024-25) of the Council Plan 2021-25 seek to have a positive effect within the Knox municipality.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report does not have any environmental or amenity issues for discussion. Several initiatives within Year 4 (2024-25) of the Council Plan 2021-25 seek to have a positive effect on environmental issues within the Knox municipality.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

This report does not contain any financial and resource implications apart from what is detailed in the discussion in item one above.

## **7. RISKS**

The development of the Council Plan Progress Report prioritised the assessment of risk throughout the process.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Leading, listening and governing responsibly**

Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

Strategy 4.2 - Our diverse community is informed and has opportunities to participate and provide feedback through clear and meaningful communication and engagement.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Q 4 2024-25 Year 4 Council Plan Progress Report [**8.2.1** - 49 pages]



## Introduction

On 25 October 2021, Council formally adopted the Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan). These plans are our commitment to making Knox a great place now and into the future.

### Community Plan 2021-2031

This plan was developed with and for our community. It includes our Community Vision statement, and describes what we, as a collective, will focus on to achieve that vision.

**Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.**

### Council Plan 2021-2025

This plan provides direction to the organisation and describes how we're going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community by incorporating Knox's Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP). We have flagged the initiatives that will contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community with a ♦ symbol.

### Our Key Directions

Both plans contain five Key Directions which describe in further detail what we as a community are going to focus on to achieve our Community Vision. These Key Directions drive the work of Council and ensure we are working towards achieving the Community Vision.



#### Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.



#### Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.



#### Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.



#### Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.



#### Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

# Progress Report Q4, 2024/2025

This is the final report on progress against the initiatives under each Key Direction of the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).

**Initiatives**

The initiatives reported are those that were to be delivered in the final year of the plan (2024-25) with the commentary detailing the work completed.

Each Key Direction also has a major initiative(s). The major initiatives were those identified by Council as priorities to be undertaken during the financial year and have “(Major Initiative)” in the title. Major initiatives are the critical pieces of work that deliver on Council’s objectives. In the “Initiative – 2024-25 Milestone” column, the Council Plan action appears first, with the annual Major Initiative following after a hyphen (“-”).

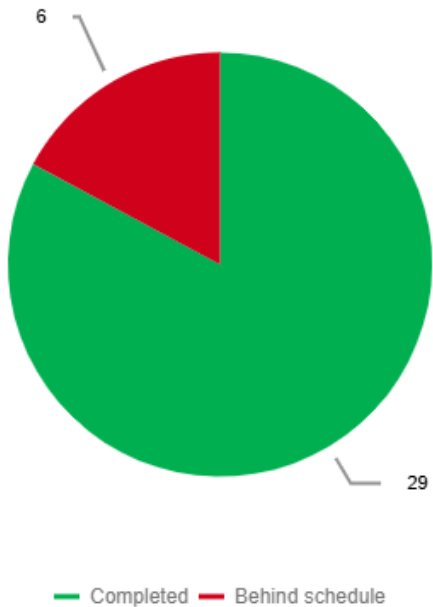
Progress targets are set against each initiative by quarter based on when key milestones for the year will be completed. Progress status is reported based on the following colour coding:

Complete	Behind schedule
	

**Indicators**

The indicators identified in the Council Plan were designed to tell us whether the work that we’re doing is contributing to a positive change in our community. They spanned the four years of the plan and are reported on every six months. It must be noted, however, that some data has not changed due to different reporting timeframes, and therefore some indicators will still include baseline data.

Q4, 2024/2025 - Progress Summary





The assessment of progress against the milestones relates to Q4, 2024-2025, the final quarter of the four-year Council Plan 2021-25.

## Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.

***Maximise the local economy by supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.***

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 1.1.1	<b>Work with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils to deliver key initiatives of the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy - Undertake stakeholder engagement on the draft Spatial Plan for the Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) and seek Council endorsement of the final plan.</b>	Behind schedule	50%	The draft Issues and Opportunities paper has been prepared to inform the Spatial Plan. Targeted stakeholder engagement is proposed to be undertaken on the draft paper in August 2025. The outcomes of this engagement will inform the draft Spatial Plan which is expected to be presented to Council for endorsement in January 2026. This initiative has not been achieved by 30 June 2025 due to delays in the procurement process in engaging a consultant to assist in the development of the Spatial Plan.	
CP 1.1.4	<b>Continue to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of future economic development initiatives - Finalise and endorse the economic strategic plan to inform the future work program and priorities of Knox's Economic Development service.</b>	Behind schedule	50%	The Economic Development service continues to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of economic activities, relying on economy.id data and other datasets. Extensive research has also been undertaken to gain insight and an understanding of the economic profile of the City of Knox, as well as detailed benchmarking against similar Local Government Areas. The Economic Strategic Plan is intended to inform the service plan priorities for Economic Development. The Lewis Road Industrial Precinct project is a pilot review that has commenced and will inform the scope and methodology of the broader Strategic Plan. The finalisation of the strategic plan has been delayed due to other service priorities including finalisation of the Boronia grant funded projects.	



*Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 1.2.6	<b>Implement Council's decision regarding kindergarten review - Finalise alternative sessional kindergarten providers to operate from Council kindergarten facilities from January 2025 and commence implementation of a transition plan to support an effective transition for children and families and the continuity of sessional kindergarten within Knox. (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	As of 31 December 2024, Knox City Council ceased being a kindergarten service provider for all stand-alone sessional kindergartens. From 1 January 2025, the 18 stand-alone sessional kindergartens that operated in 2024 were transferred to not-for-profit kindergarten providers who have entered into lease arrangements for Council's facilities. Council will continue to provide funded kindergarten programs at the Bayswater and Wantirna South Early Years Hubs and will manage the central registration system for sessional kindergarten within the municipality to ensure that children and families in Knox have fair access to kindergarten places.	✓

### The difference we're making

Progress against the indicators identified in the *Council Plan 2021-25*.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Maintaining the number of existing businesses in Knox.</b>	The total number of businesses registered in Knox.	Annual	14,046 (2019)	14,077 (2021)	14,778 (2022)	14,859 (2023)	15,096 (2024)	Number of businesses based on 2024 calendar year.
<b>An increase in new businesses in Knox.</b>	The total number of new businesses registered in Knox.	Annual	875 (2020-21)	1,174	300	1,038	1,172	1,172 new businesses were registered in 2024-25. Five subsequently cancelled business registration during 2024-25, leaving 1,167 active registrations. While all are or were GST active (which signifies registration of a 'real' rather than a micro business), 915 remained GST active on 30 June 2025. (Data extracted from the Australian Business Register (ABR) on 24 July 2025 for the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025.)
<b>More residents employed in Knox.</b>	The percentage of Knox residents who work in Knox.	5-yearly	32.2% (2016)	32.1% (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	This measure relies on Census data and cannot be refreshed until after the next Census, which will be held in August 2026.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>More people with need for assistance employed in Knox.</b>	The percentage of Knox residents (community of interest - people with need for assistance) employed.	5-yearly	83.9% (2016)	87.0% (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	<p>This measure relies on Census data and cannot be refreshed until after the next Census, which will be held in August 2026.</p> <p>Note: this measure relates to people with a disability who are in the labour force (i.e. working or looking for work) and does not include all people with a disability. This measure also excludes children under 15.</p>
<b>An increase in Knox's Gross Regional Product/capita.</b>	An estimate of the total value of all final goods and services produced in the economy based on final market value for the end consumer.	Annual	\$65,030 (2018)	\$70,819 (2021)	\$74,416 (2022)	\$74,336 (2023)	\$74,102 (2024)	<p>Knox's Gross Regional Product (GRP) was \$74,102 per capita in June 2024. Council's economic data provider (.id) advises that GRP data is based on a dataset which is updated each financial year and that differences in some of the numbers previously reported can be expected. The comparative figure for 2023, as adjusted, is \$74,336 per capita. (Data from .id economic profile, based on National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) data, 2025.)</p> <p>Note: June 2024 is the most recent data available.</p>

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved secondary school completion rates.</b>	Percentage of population 15+ years with Year 12 or equivalent.	5-yearly	55.0% (2016)	60.7% (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	This measure relies on Census data and cannot be refreshed until after the next Census, which will be held in August 2026.
<b>Increased participation in Knox's Business Education program.</b>	Number of businesses who participated in Knox education programs.	Annual	335 (2020-21)	113	24	393	421	421 people attended business networking and education programs and events in 2024-25.
<b>More community education programs run by Knox.</b>	The number of community training workshops run by Knox.	Half-yearly	12	12	18	16	15	15 training sessions were held in 2024-25 with a total of 266 attendees.
<b>Participation in funded 3-year-old kindergarten.</b>	Percentage of eligible children enrolled in Government-funded 3-year-old kindergarten.	Annual	New data set	69.3% (2022)	86.00% (2023)	85.00% (2024)	Data not available	The 2024 figure is the most recent available.



Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Increased participation in funded 4-year-old kindergarten.</b>	Percentage of eligible children enrolled in Government-funded 4-year-old kindergarten.	Annual	85.7% (2020)	91.0% (2022)	91.15% (2023)	90.00% (2024)	Data not available	The 2024 figure is the most recent available.

## Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure



Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.

*Plan for and support diverse housing to meet changing community needs.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.1.1	<b>Implement the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan to increase the supply of social housing and address homelessness in Knox - Progress the Year 2 actions of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy, including exploring policy options for reinvesting financial contributions received through developer negotiations to maximise social housing outcomes, consulting with registered housing providers to explore partnership models, and undertaking community education and advocacy activities ahead of the Federal election. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	The development at Boral Quarry includes a requirement for a 10% affordable housing contribution. This was increased from a 5% contribution as a requirement of the Minister for Planning becoming Planning Authority for the planning scheme amendment. The development of the Norvel Quarry in Ferntree Gully was recently gazetted and includes a provision for the gifting of 8 lots to a Registered Housing Association for affordable housing provision. A working group from the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group has been planning an event for National Homelessness week 2025. The webinar, entitled 'More Than Shelter', will feature speakers from services that offer alternative supports for people experiencing homelessness. In November 2024 residents living in public and social housing were engaged to build community connections and resilience. As a result, there are lasting initiatives across various estates, including resident maintenance of the community garden, with an ongoing program being run by a community house to support residents to cook healthy food using the garden produce. All teams involved in work regarding social and affordable housing have adopted and continue to use the definitions of social and affordable housing and minimum supply of social housing targets outlined in the strategy.	✓


Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.1.2	<b>Commence review of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 - Undertake community and stakeholder public engagement on a draft Issues and Opportunities report to inform the preparation of a new or revised Knox Housing Strategy. ♦ (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Behind schedule	10%	Commencement of the project has been delayed due to various State Government planning reforms that impact the development of a housing strategy and distribution of State Government led housing targets. A project scope has been developed for the housing strategy review based on the current status of the planning reforms and continued uncertainty over the direction of local housing strategies from the State Government. The project will be discussed at a Councillor briefing on 11 August 2025. In the meantime, the State Government needs to issue Access To Opportunities and Services (ATOS) modelling so councils have a direction for how the State Government is contemplating the housing targets being implemented. Commencing preparation of the Knox Housing Strategy review has been included as an action in the 2025-26 Annual Budget to progress the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.	
CP 2.1.3	<b>Build on regional partnerships by contributing to the work of the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA) - Continue to progress the the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA) Strategic Plan and Communications Plan to strengthen the Alliance's impact on advocating for increased supply of social and affordable housing in the region ahead of the Federal election. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Council staff continue to represent Knox at the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA) to explore advocacy opportunities, provide updates to EAHA participating Councils on Knox's Social and Affordable Housing mid-term review and case studies, planning for Homelessness week for 2025, with a Council officer engaged in the working group focusing on planning, delivery and evaluation. Council has also gained value from partnering and engaging with other EAHA Councils to build knowledge and explore further partnership opportunities.	

*Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.2.4	<b>Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal program - Deliver Stage 1 of the Green Spine Corridor project within the Boronia Renewal Strategy.</b>	Behind schedule	65%	The contractor commenced construction works in January 2025 for Stage 1 along Genista Avenue towards Dorset Road, temporarily stopping works at the railway line overpass. Council received a Memorandum of Authorisation (MOA) from VicRoads with extremely limited day-work hour conditions. This has delayed completion of the works on-site. In the meantime, works were completed on the shared path within Chandler Park, east of Allandale Road. The scope of pavement construction works was then slightly amended to allow for an easier progress of works and reduced requirements to allow for easier accordance with VicRoads' MOA conditions. This involved temporary road closure between Dorset Road and Floriston Road as well as Night-Works for a short section until the pavement works were completed. The contractor then continued works on Chandler Road east of Dorset Road with shared path and road pavement works essentially completed up to Floriston Road. Works are continuing along Chandler Road east of Floriston Road and it is now expected that Stage 1 of the Green Spine Corridor project will be completed by late November/early December 2025.	
CP 2.2.5	<b>Progress implementation of the Knox Central program - Develop an Expression of Interest package for prospective developers of the development of the Knox Central precinct land.</b>	Behind schedule	60%	A needs analysis for future civic and community facilities is underway. The feature and level survey was completed in Q4 2024-25. A comprehensive suite of datasets has been uploaded and checked against Council's Geographic Information System (GIS) layers to provide an accurate baseline for future development. Interim development advice has been finalised. The timing for an Expression of Interest has been pushed out several years while a needs analysis for future civic and community facilities, along with community engagement, is completed. The imposition of Windfall Gains tax by the state government also requires a different financial strategy from the one originally envisaged in the timeline for development of the land.	



Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.2.9	<b>Understand community needs across the suburbs of Knox to plan for community infrastructure requirements for the next 5-20 years - Continue using the Community and Social Infrastructure Modelling (CASIMO) tool and undertake service and place-based analysis to inform community infrastructure planning. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Data and needs analysis are underway with the support of the supplier of CASIMO who has been contracted to aid in the delivery of Community Infrastructure Needs Assessments (CINAs) for Library, Maternal and Child Health (MCH), and Playgroups. Council staff are working to ensure that all the data in CASIMO is current and consistent to allow a thorough CINA process. Knox's subscription with CASIMO will continue over the 2025-26 financial year and probably over the 2026-27 financial year. The completed CINAs will provide the evidence base for a Community Infrastructure Plan.	✓
CP 2.2.12	<b>Review and develop the Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan - Progress implementation of the Year 3 actions of the 2022-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) and review the current DAMP in preparation for the next iteration.</b>	Completed	100%	In 2024–25, Council continued to implement Year 3 actions of the current Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) while also commencing the review process for the next iteration of the plan. Community engagement for the new 2026–2029 DAMP began in early 2025, with adoption of the updated plan anticipated in December 2025. In 2024-25 Council: conducted proactive patrols in Council parks and reserves to address dogs off lead, unregistered pets, and dog litter issues; reviewed animal registration data of non-residential areas to identify non-declared guard dogs; continued delivery of a Council and state government initiative to provide discounted cat and dog desexing services to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents; promoted responsible pet ownership at the annual 'Pets in the Park' community event held in April 2025; investigated all reported animal management issues, ensuring responsive and consistent enforcement; provided cat traps to residents experiencing cat nuisance issues; and delivered staff training covering animal management practices, conflict management, situational awareness, and harm reduction strategies. The planned activity to reconcile data contained in national microchip registries with Council's registration database was not undertaken during the reporting period due to unforeseen IT issues that affected data processing. This issue has been rectified and the activity is now scheduled to occur during 2025-26.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.2.13	<b>Finalise and implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy - Undertake public exhibition of the planning scheme amendment associated with implementation of the Bayswater Renewal Strategy and refer and report to Council on the outcomes of the public exhibition process. (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Behind schedule	20%	Public exhibition of the planning scheme amendment associated with Bayswater Renewal Strategy has been delayed due to State Government announcements for state-led activity centre planning. It was initially thought that Bayswater Activity Centre would form part of the activity centres nominated by State Government for future planning under new planning controls. Drafting of the package of planning controls to form part of an authorisation request to the Minister for Planning to commence the planning scheme amendment process was consequently delayed. It has now been confirmed that the activity centre has not been nominated. Officers have now advanced the preparation of planning scheme amendment documents (Amendment C204knox). The amendment will be lodged in July 2025 to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit the amendment. Once negotiations with the Department of Transport and Planning have been finalised, officers will bring a report to Council recommending adoption of the amendment documents to be exhibited. Preparing the Bayswater Renewal Strategy Planning Scheme Amendment for implementation into the Knox Planning Scheme has been included as an action in the 2025-26 Annual Budget to progress the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.	

*Provide, maintain and advocate for accessible and sustainable ways to move around Knox.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.3.14	<b>Advocate to State Government for improved public transport and arterial road connectivity in Knox - Continue to participate in the Eastern Transport Coalition, develop Project Specific Advocacy material for Council's Transport priorities, and advocate for Long Term Public Transport priorities including bus services across Knox. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Two strategic and operational meetings to discuss key pipeline, traffic engineering and road safety matters were held in Q4 2024-25 between Council officers and DTP personnel. Council officers and Councillor Lockwood continued to attend the Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC) in Q4 2024-25, through which Knox continues to work with neighbouring Councils to support a coordinated approach to transport advocacy. Key matters considered were Infrastructure Victoria's Draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy, and the ETC 2025 advocacy work plan, including gearing up for State election advocacy. Other ETC matters covered included: revision of ETC terms of reference; review of the Federal election commitments; meeting with Harriet Shing MP, Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop, the Doncaster Road Corridor in Manningham, and Working with Bus Association Victoria where our goals align. Council also continues to pursue advocacy through the ETC by identifying priority safe arterial road crossing routes to enhance access to frequent bus services. Regular meetings are happening between Council officers and the Level Crossing Removal Projects group to discuss the Boronia Station Precinct Upgrade project. Items discussed include design details, land matters, and project risks.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.3.15	<b>Enhance sustainable transport utilisation through delivery of active transport infrastructure - Adopt the Knox Cycling Action Plan 2025-35 and continue to deliver the Footpath Program, and the Shared Path and On Road Bicycle infrastructure program. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	The newly adopted Knox Cycling Action Plan is being used to inform priorities in the shared path program from 2025-26 onwards. Construction works started on the Green Spine off-road shared path in Chandler Road, Boronia, and on-road bike treatments and off-road shared paths in Harold Street, Wantirna. Construction work is to start soon on a footpath along Mount View Road, Upper Ferntree Gully. Council's in-house Civil Construction Group has completed the construction of five concrete pads for the installation of bike repair stations. The following projects are currently in their design phase: a Shared Zone for Macauley Place, Bayswater; a shared path in Brennock Park Drive, Ferntree Gully; footpaths in High Street Road, Wantirna South; and Mountain Highway, The Basin, between Wicks Road and Claremont Avenue. Scoping and investigation are underway on possible future shared path projects in Railway Parade, Upper Ferntree Gully, between Burwood Highway and Quarry Road.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 2.3.17	<b>Provide new and innovative community transport programs for the Knox community - Continue to deliver an accessible and affordable community transport service for the Knox community, with a focus to investigate inclusion of an on-demand service. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Community Transport has successfully delivered on its goal of expanding and innovating service delivery for the Knox community. Building on the momentum from Term 2, which saw the introduction of 30 tailored winter outings and a restructure of membership areas to improve scheduling and accessibility, the program continues to grow in scale and relevance. New bookings for senior club outings have been received for 2025-26, with 81 confirmed bookings to date. This reflects an increase of approximately 58% compared with the typical 48-50 bookings received in previous years. Almost all senior clubs took advantage of the opportunity to secure a second booking, as permitted under the revised guidelines introduced in Term 2. Term 3 of the Knox Outings Program is scheduled to commence in September 2025, in alignment with the calendar-year format of this initiative. Feedback from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation of the variety of destinations and the value of the service in reducing social isolation and improving access. Internal departments have also increased their utilisation of Community Transport buses to support broader community events, such as the recently held Radiant Light Festival shuttle service, which further embeds Community Transport as a vital and visible community asset. In the light of increased demand, including club bookings, regular outings, and the fortnightly shopping trips, the proposed on-demand Community Transport service will not be pursued at this time. Recent discussions with an external provider, already well-equipped to deliver such a service within Knox, have reinforced this decision. The 2024-25 outcomes clearly demonstrate our commitment to delivering accessible, innovative, and responsive transport solutions that evolve with the community's needs.	✓

### The difference we're making

Progress against the indicators identified in the *Council Plan 2021-25*.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>More social and rental housing that is affordable to low- income households in Knox.</b>	The proportion of need that can be met with existing local social housing and affordable private rentals.	5-yearly	77% (2020)	77% (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	The Minimum Supply of Social Housing methodology is reviewed periodically in line with the availability of Census and Population and Household forecasts. The 2021 figure remains the most recent.
<b>A reduction in the median household incomes needed to purchase a typical house.</b>	The average number of household incomes needed to purchase a typical house.	5-yearly	8.9 (2016)	9.7 (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	This measure relies on Census data and cannot be refreshed until after the next Census, which will be held in August 2026.
<b>Increased public transport usage.</b>	Percentage of weekday trips made by public transport.	2-yearly	6.54% (2018)	6.41% (2020)	3.47%	3.38%	Data not available	The survey providing this data is held periodically by Transport Victoria. The 2023-24 results are the most recent. 19,302 public transport trips originated in Knox in 2023-24, the number representing 3.38% of all trips made.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>More one- and two- bedroom dwellings approved for construction in Knox.</b>	The number of one- and two-bedroom dwellings approved for construction in Knox.	Annual	240 (2020-21)	Data not available	174	52	78	Two one-bedroom and 76 two-bedroom dwellings were approved for construction in Knox in 2024-25.
<b>An increase in the number of cyclists recorded on a typical day at a typical site on Knox's shared path networks.</b>	The number of cyclists recorded on a typical day at a typical site on Knox's shared path networks.	Annual	517 (March 2020)	1,090 (March 2022)	1,251 (March 2023)	1,300	1,516	2024-25 saw positive growth in shared path usage.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with recreation facilities.</b>	Community satisfaction score for recreation facilities.	Annual	74 (2021)	73 (2022)	70 (2023)	80 (2024)	80 (2025)	Community satisfaction with recreation facilities remains excellent.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved community satisfaction with arts centres and libraries.</b>	Community satisfaction score for arts centres and libraries.	Annual	72 (2021)	70 (2022)	70 (2023)	80 (2024)	79 (2025)	Arts centres and libraries were measured separately in Knox City Council's 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey. Although down one per cent from 2024, community satisfaction with arts centres remains excellent.
						85 (2024)	85 (2025)	Arts centres and libraries were measured separately in Knox City Council's 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey. Community satisfaction with library services remains excellent.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with appearance of public areas.</b>	Community satisfaction score for appearance of public areas.	Annual	72 (2021)	69 (2022)	63 (2023)	75 (2024)	74 (2025)	Community satisfaction with the appearance of public areas remains stable, down one per cent on the 2024 figure.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with sealed local roads.</b>	Community satisfaction score for sealed local roads.	Annual	70 (2021)	68 (2022)	55 (2023)	67 (2024)	68 (2025)	Community satisfaction with sealed local roads remains stable, up one per cent on the 2024 figure.



Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved community satisfaction with planning for population growth.</b>	Community satisfaction score for planning for population growth.	Annual	55 (2021)	56 (2022)	Data not available	70 (2024)	63 (2025)	The measurable and significant decline in satisfaction with planning for population growth from 2024 reflects a rise in community concerns about the effect of population growth on roads and traffic and on access to services and facilities.

## Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

*Preserve our biodiversity and waterways, and enhance our urban landscape.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 3.1.2	<b>Implement Knox's Biodiversity Resilience Plan - Progress implementation of funded Year 2 actions from the Biodiversity Action Plan. ♦ (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	All discrete year 2 activities completed: sites of biodiversity update, stage 1 of the community engagement strategy, and the citizen science program. In addition, all annual programs have been completed.	✓

*Prepare for, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 3.2.5	<b>Implement the high priority actions from Years 2-4 of the Climate Response Plan - Progress implementation of the high priority Year 4 actions of the Climate Response Plan. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Year 4 actions of the Climate Response Plan commenced or progressed in Q4 2024-25 include: continued promotion and engagement with small- to medium-sized businesses on the Business Energy Saver Program; promotion of the Solar Savers program, including on-boarding of additional suppliers and services for launch in Q1 2025-26; completion of the Major Road Streetlight light-emitting diode (LED) replacement program, with a total of 1,669 lights installed across Knox; continuation of the mid-term review of the Knox Climate Response Plan; launch of a one-year trial of the 'Good for the Hood' community information program and support for the Nature Stewards Community Leadership program; installation of 50kW of Solar and 47kW of Batteries in four community facilities, including Knox Infolink and Outer Eastern Food Share; and the adoption of Knox's first Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Policy.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 3.2.6	<b>Trial new and recycled materials in the construction of shared paths and as part of Council's road renewal program - Evaluate the effectiveness of sites where trials have been initiated utilising recycled materials as part of civil construction projects and make recommendations on the continued use of recycled materials in concrete and asphalt works. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	The use of recycled materials in civil construction projects has proved successful to date, with their continued application in concrete and asphalt works now considered standard practice. Council will remain committed to identifying and adopting new opportunities to incorporate recycled materials in future construction programs. Support for innovation in this area will continue through the trial of emerging recycled products, with a particular focus on promoting local innovation and contributing to the circular economy.	✓

**Lead by example and encourage our community to reduce waste.**

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 3.3.10	<b>Secure long-term solutions for the treatment and disposal of residual waste streams.</b>	Completed	100%	Communications have been released regarding this partnership, including a bulletin on Knox City Council's website: 'Advanced waste processing'. Planning processes are now underway for this facility from an external provider. Council is represented on the Project Oversight Group and will be updated on progress regularly.	✓

### The difference we're making

Progress against the indicators identified in the *Council Plan 2021-25*

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>More houses within 400m of open space.</b>	The percentage of Knox homes within 400m of a public open space of any size.	2-yearly	69% (2018)	76.9% (2021)	Data not available	Data not available	84.4% (2024)	The data source from which this is drawn is produced every three calendar years: 2018, 2021, 2024. The 2024 data has only recently been published and is as provided. No update is expected until 2027.
<b>An increase in tree canopy coverage.</b>	Percentage of Knox's total area under tree canopy cover.	2-yearly	18% (2018)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	The 2018 results for tree canopy cover in Knox remain the most accurate data available to Council.
<b>A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.</b>	Tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions generated per capita in total (waste, transport, gas, and electricity).	Annual (September)	15 (2017)	14.5 (2020-21)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Data to be updated in late August 2025 when the emissions data is received. The figure will be provided with commentary in Council's 2024-2025 Annual Report.
<b>An increase in renewable energy usage.</b>	Renewable energy as a percentage of total electricity consumption.	Annual	7.3% (2017)	56% (2021)	47%	48%	Data not available	Data to be updated in late August 2025 when all the energy bills have been received by Council. The percentage will be provided with commentary in Council's 2024-2025 Annual Report.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>A higher annual net gain of trees in Knox.</b>	A higher annual net gain of trees in Knox.	Annual	1,249 (2020-21)	1,420	1,611	1,381	1,446	867 trees were removed and 2,248 trees planted in 2024-25.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with waste management.</b>	Community satisfaction score for waste management.	Annual	75 (2021)	76 (2022)	69 (2023)	83 (2024)	82 (2025)	Community satisfaction with waste management remained at an excellent level in 2024-25.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with environmental sustainability.</b>	Community satisfaction score for environmental sustainability.	Annual	65 (2021)	65 (2022)	62 (2023)	71 (2024)	69 (2025)	Community satisfaction with Council's performance in meeting its environmental responsibilities declined marginally in 2024-25 but remained measurably higher than the long-term average since 2014 of 65.


Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>An increase in kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.</b>	Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.	Half-yearly	52.10% (2020-21)	51.60%	53.12%	73.76%	71.21%	The slight decrease in Knox's waste diversion rate is largely attributable to the successful uptake of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), which has shifted recyclable materials away from Council's collection system, and to lower green waste tonnages due to reduced rainfall. As a result, these materials are no longer included in our reported recycling figures, impacting the calculated diversion percentage. Despite this, Knox achieved a 71% diversion rate—well above the state average—placing the Council as a leader in reducing waste to landfill and positioning us strongly to meet the state targets of 72% by 2025 and 80% by 2030.

## Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.

*Support our community to improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.1.2	<b>Prioritise mental health and wellbeing initiatives by focusing on community partnerships and collective impact - Work with the Mental Health Roundtable and the Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee to develop and deliver positive mental health activities. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	The Mental Health Action Plan has come to its conclusion and a report is currently being developed to report on and acknowledge its impact in supporting the mental health of the Knox community. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training was delivered in June 2025 to 13 volunteers from organisations servicing Knox, including Feed One Feed All, Share Space, and Coonara Community House. The training was very well received with many attendees expressing interest in other volunteers from their organisations also completing it. Volunteers were identified as a vital group to support in upskilling due to the essential role they play in many people's lives, and the ongoing impact the training will have on their ability and confidence to support the community.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.1.3	<b>Progress implementation of the Children, Youth and Seniors Plan - Progress implementation of the Year 4 actions of the Child, Youth and Seniors Plan to meet the needs of the diverse stakeholder groups. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	During Q4 2024-25 Council collaborated with Department of Government Services to provide a series of themed movie events for seniors, each designed to promote awareness of important social issues affecting older adults. The themes included Elder Abuse, Dementia, and Ageism, with each screening accompanied by a guest speaker who provided valuable insights and facilitated discussion. The initiative was well-received, achieving an average attendance rate of 75%, reflecting strong community engagement and interest in the topics presented. An intergenerational program involving students from Boronia Secondary College and residents of a local aged care facility was successfully completed. Participants from both groups provided overwhelmingly positive feedback, highlighting the mutual benefits gained through shared experiences and meaningful interactions. Importantly, many participants expressed a desire to continue the relationships formed during the program, with plans underway to support ongoing connection beyond the formal initiative. Knox City Council, in collaboration with the Department of Government Services, delivered an information session aimed at equipping community members aged 55 and over with practical knowledge to safeguard themselves against online threats and scams. The event attracted 45 attendees, who engaged enthusiastically with the content. Participants were provided with simple, actionable strategies to protect their personal information online, contributing to a more informed and digitally resilient community. Based on post-event evaluations, the program received an average satisfaction rating of 4.65 out of 5 stars, indicating a high level of participant approval and positive engagement.	




Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.1.4	<b>Develop and implement an Active Participation Plan - Beyond Structured Sport - Commence implementation of approved and funded actions from the Active Knox (participation) plan. ♦ (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	The Active Participation Plan - Beyond Structured Sport will be integrated with Council's Open Space Plan. Council continues to have conversations with stakeholders to progress the future development of Mountain Bike Dirt Jumps and advocate to ensure key principles are used when developing active recreation projects. Council's Leisure Services team, in collaboration with the Communications team, are investigating hosting tennis facility locations on Council's website, which will improve the availability of information for active/informal recreation opportunities within Knox. Council is also looking to install active recreation activity promoting signage within Council parks and reserves.	✓
CP 4.1.7	<b>Support the creation of new physical activity-based programs and community infrastructure across the municipality - Deliver infrastructure improvements at Council sporting reserves and identify new program opportunities at Indoor Leisure sites. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	As intended, Q4 2024-25 saw the successful implementation of a number of new internally run leisure programs at Carrington Park Leisure Centre, including Pilates, Strength and Balance, and Tai Chi. New badminton and pickleball line markings were installed at Knox Regional Netball Centre, resulting in the successful implementation of internally run badminton and pickleball social competitions at the site. Delivery of new infrastructure and programs across the leisure sites achieved Council's overall strategy.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.1.8	<b>Develop and implement programs to enable older and vulnerable residents to access technology - Deliver a suite of programs and workshops to assist older and vulnerable residents to effectively use available technology and gain awareness of cyber-security, including the ability to search the internet, access banking and send emails with attachments. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	In Q4 2024-25 the Digital Connections Stakeholder Group continued to collaborate in promoting programs and events across Knox aimed at supporting older and vulnerable residents. Your Library maintained its delivery of one-on-one technical support sessions, providing personalised assistance to those in need. In addition, the Social and Inclusive Communities team offered onsite support at one of the Knox housing estates, helping residents address technology-related challenges with their personal devices. A pilot program in partnership with the Department of Government Services was held on 14 May 2025, focusing on online safety for seniors, with particular emphasis on scam prevention. The session attracted 45 participants, who were provided with practical strategies to safeguard their personal information. Among those who provided feedback, the satisfaction rating was 4.53 out of 5. Planning is also underway for the launch of an intergenerational digital literacy program, which will connect older community members with younger generations to foster mutual learning and support. This initiative is scheduled to commence later in 2025.	✓

*Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.2.9	<b>Contribute to the collective efforts in preventing and responding to family violence - Progress implementation of the Year 1 workplan for the Free From Violence Local Government Program and continue to deliver family violence prevention and awareness raising activities including 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	The Free From Violence project steering group met on 12 June 2025, with seven staff across Council coming together develop the project workplan. Active Bystander training was delivered to Council staff on 15 May 2025. 23 staff from eight Council departments attended. The training objectives were to build participants' ability to identify harmful and dominating language and to grow reflective skills to be able to acknowledge their own bias and privilege. The session equipped participants with basic conversation-based skills to intervene as bystanders in safe and effective ways linked to creating change. The 3Rs of Family Violence training was held for Council staff on 17 June 2025, with 19 staff from five Council departments in attendance. The session was delivered to enable staff to Recognise the signs of family violence, Respond to a disclosure of family violence, and to learn how to Refer someone to support services.	✓
CP 4.2.10	<b>Embed the State Government's Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) to support the safety and wellbeing of children - Finalise the implementation of training and access to Child Link for all Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Early Childhood Teachers. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Training and access to Child Link for all Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Early Childhood Teachers was completed in Q1 2024-25.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.2.11	<b>Develop and implement Knox Council's Disability Action Plan incorporated within the Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27 - Progress implementation of the Year 3 Disability Action Plan actions within the Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-2027, with a focus on carers of people with a disability.</b>	Completed	100%	Q4 2024-25 Disability Action Plan initiatives included a weekly carer exercise class at Knox Leisureworks and a monthly carer walk in Ferntree Gully, offering carers physical activity, social connection, and access to information on local services and supports. The monthly Borderline Personality Disorder carers group and the Women with Disabilities hub group provided valuable information, peer connection, and opportunities for leadership and advocacy development. A webinar for parents and carers on supporting a positive autistic identity was held in May 2025, attracting 32 attendees. Early years educators attended two professional development sessions: understanding children with cerebral palsy (29 attendees) and self-regulation through physical development (47 attendees). Knox Disability Advisory Committee members were supported to participate in a Council Plan development workshop. Six local residents with disabilities participated in Council photo shoots, improving the diversity of Council's print and electronic communications. Access Key accessibility guides were made available to enhance access and inclusion. The Accessing Knox e-newsletter was distributed monthly to share disability events and opportunities with the community.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.2.12	<b>Develop and implement the Dementia Friendly Action Plan - Progress implementation of the Year 2 actions of the Knox Dementia Friendly Action Plan, with a focus on increasing awareness and available support across the community. ♦ (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	A partnership has been established with the Community Gardens to develop a dementia-friendly sensory garden, designed to support visits from small community groups. This initiative will incorporate two existing raised garden beds and provide access to selected areas throughout the garden that offer a curated sensory experience. Guided tours are scheduled to commence in September 2025. The Knox Dementia Advisory Group has transitioned to an Alliance model. As part of this transition, ten new community members were recruited to form a working group that collaborated with Council officers to develop the Alliance's Terms of Reference and operational framework. All ten members subsequently chose to join the Alliance as core group members. The Alliance was officially launched on 18 June 2025, with 63 members of the Knox community attending the event. The launch featured an afternoon melodies concert, a performance by The Haven dementia-inclusive choir, a presentation by Dementia Australia, and a Q&A session with members of the working group. Additional dementia awareness initiatives delivered during Q4 2024-25 included a community presentation of Dementia Australia's Become a Dementia Friend program at the Wantirna South Probus Club, attended by 80 people. A condensed version of the program was also presented at the Winter Warmers Seniors Movie Festival, which featured the film 'June Again', highlighting the lived experience of a woman with dementia and her family, to an audience of 50 community members.	

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.2.14	<b>Implement Council's adopted Gender Equality Action Plan - Progress the delivery of Year 3 of the Gender Equality Action Plan, ensuring Council meets its obligations under the Gender Equality Act 2020. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Council's Gender Equality Action plan expired 30 June 2025. 18 strategic actions were outlined with 10 complete and 8 ongoing and transferred to the next four-year Gender Equality Action Plan. Actions completed in Q4 2024-25 were the establishment of a dedicated data program aligned to the Gender Equality Act reporting obligations. This is currently in the testing phase prior to the report's lodgement in 2025-26. Council achieved a 42% employee participation rate in the People Matter Survey for Gender Equality Reporting. The Rainbow flag was raised at the Civic Centre alongside the staff event for IDAHOBIT Day. Active bystander training continues to be delivered for staff. The 3Rs of Family Violence training was delivered to staff. Equity Impact Assessment training was delivered to staff and the Senior Leadership Team. GenderWorks Australia was awarded the contract to support the 2025 reporting obligations and the development of the next four-year Gender Equality Action Plan. Three Equity Impact Assessments were completed, bringing the 2024-25 total to 14.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.2.15	<b>Develop and implement education and advocacy programs to address ageism and increase community respect and inclusion for all ages across Knox - Deliver a targeted campaign to increase awareness of ageism and ongoing intergenerational programs to connect community members of all ages, including programs delivered in collaboration with Playgroup Victoria and Your Library. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Further discussions of developing and expanding intergenerational programs in the Knox municipality were held in Q4 2024-25. Collaboration with a Community House over an LGBTQIA+ Social Group continues. A school holidays games program with The Youth Hive and Your Library, with an intergenerational focus, has been confirmed and will be trialed in Q1 2025-26. Interest from local kindergarten services was positive and our intergenerational playgroup continues to be popular. A highlight of Q4 2024-25 was to observe how successful our pilot program with Boronia Residential Aged Care and Boronia K12 College was. This program exceeded expectations for all staff and participants involved with high attendance each week. Planning is already underway for another program in late 2025. Planning continues over a digital literacy program between older members of our community and the younger generation. Program implementation is on track and program delivery is scheduled for late 2025. As part of the Winter Warmer Movie Series, the screening of 'Is Anybody There?' was shown at Knox Community Arts Centre in late June. This movie is centred on an intergenerational friendship between a curious young boy and a retired magician. Over 100 members of our community enjoyed the event, which included a brief presentation before the movie on raising awareness and understanding Ageism.	✓
CP 4.2.16	<b>Develop and deliver a range of evidence-based community training initiatives to build volunteer capacity - Provide a range of workshops and activities that support community groups, clubs, not-for-profit organisations and volunteers, based on participant feedback and identified needs. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Five workshops were held during Q4 2024-25 with an average of 18 community members in attendance. Topics included '3R's of Volunteering - Recruitment, Retention, Recognition' (2 April), 'Grant writing' (14 May), 'Building Aboriginal Culture Competency' (4 June), 'Grants information' sessions (29 May and 12 June) and 'Social media for community groups' (25 June).	✓

*Honour and integrate First Nations Culture into actions and environments.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 4.3.17	<b>Work in partnership with local First Nations people, relevant services and key networks to progress Reconciliation - Prepare to conduct an Aboriginal heritage/cultural values study to inform land management and planning, host a First Nations voice forum to hear current topics of interest from the community, deliver cultural safety training, and conduct an organisation cultural safety audit. ♦</b>	Completed	100%	Council officers have developed the First Nations Organisational Cultural Safety audit and report for consideration by Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in Q1 2025-2026. A Cultural Safety Audit was undertaken with the internal Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group to help inform a broader consultation. We continue planning to find the best way to deliver a Cultural Values study with Wurundjeri and Bunurong. Council is supporting consultation with Wurundjeri and Bunurong elders on climate change and land management practices. Three cultural walks and education sessions were held in Q4 2024-25. Forum planning has identified that a place-based consultation approach would be more culturally appropriate and planning for this has commenced. First Nations lead has continued to consult, in place, with the First Nations community to hear about current concerns and provide an opportunity for community to give feedback. Sorry Day Ceremony was held at Knox Civic Centre in May 2025, attended by stolen generation families and the First People's Assembly.	✓



### The difference we're making

Progress against the indicators identified in the *Council Plan 2021-25*.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>A reduction in the number of adults who report high or very high psychological distress.</b>	Percentage of adults who suffer from high psychological distress.	3-yearly	18.25% (2017)	27.50% (2020)	Data not available	Data not available	15.60% (2023)	The number of adults in the City of Knox reporting high or very high levels of psychological distress has declined significantly since the spike recorded in 2020 (which was attributable to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic).
<b>More residents who report their health as good, very good, or excellent.</b>	Percentage of Knox adults who rate their health as 'very good' or 'excellent'.	3-yearly	40.50% (2017)	41.10% (2020)	Data not available	37.20% (2023)	Data not available	The 2023 figure remains the most recent available.
<b>An increase in the level of agreement that multiculturalism makes life better.</b>	Percentage of adults that definitely agree that multiculturalism makes life their area better.	3-yearly	48.57% (2017)	59.20% (2020)	Data not available	Data not available	64.10% (2023)	The embrace of multiculturalism in the City of Knox continues to grow.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved perceptions of safety.</b>	Percentage of adults that 'definitely' feel safe at night.	3-yearly	52.20% (2017)	Data not available	Data not available	72.00% (2024)	65.00% (2025)	The perception of safety in public areas of the City of Knox declined measurably in 2024-25, especially among older adults (aged 60 to 74 years).
<b>An increase in the number of adults who feel a sense of belonging.</b>	Percentage of adults that 'definitely' feel valued by society.	3-yearly	41.50% (2017)	46.20% (2020)	Data not available	47.00% (2023)	Data not available	The 2023 figure remains the most recent available.
<b>More adults in Knox who volunteer.</b>	Percentage of adults who definitely or sometimes help out a local group by volunteering.	3-yearly	35.10% (2017)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available	Data related to volunteering was not collected in the Victorian Population Health surveys conducted in 2020 and 2023.
<b>More infants and children in the Knox region immunised at Council run immunisation sessions.</b>	Number of children immunised at a Council run immunisation session.	Annual	5,550 (2020-21)	4,002	6,885	4,519	6,811	Number extracted from the Australian Immunisation Register.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Increased participation in key ages and stages Maternal and Child Health visits.</b>	Percentage of children participating in the key ages and stages MCH visit.	Half-yearly	96.33% (2020-21)	99.05%	95.44%	100.48%	102.37%	Council continues to have a very high level of engagement with families with young infants. (Note that a result of over 100% occurs when we have additional infants transfer into our municipality before a first home visit, and/or the birth notice was initially sent to the incorrect LGA.)
<b>Improved satisfaction with cultural activities.</b>	Community satisfaction score for community and cultural.	Annual	65 (2021)	63 (2022)	65 (2023)	78 (2024)	82 (2025)	Community satisfaction with cultural activities increased noticeably in 2024-25 and was measurably higher than the long-term average from 2017 to 2023 of 66.
<b>An increase in the number of opportunities and avenues to include First Nations' culture within Knox.</b>	The number of opportunities and initiatives that partner with First Nations people and Traditional Custodians across various departments of Council.	Annual	New data set	35 (Jan-Jun 2022)	43	45	42	This number was slightly lower than the previous year due to the unsuccessful referendum in October 2023. This has had an on-going impact on First Nations communities' capacity to trust and engage with local Government meaningfully. Council's First Nations Lead continues to work closely with our First nations community and strengthen relationships.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>An increase in the number of meals delivered through Meals on Wheels.</b>	The number of meals delivered through Meals on Wheels.	Annual	35,194 (2020-21)	31,587	31,138	32,430	31,672	The number of meals delivered remained stable in 2024-25.
<b>More clients and community members supported through Council's Community Access and Support (CAS) programs.</b>	Number of clients and community members who have participated in CAS programs.	Annual	4,348 (2020-21)	4,656	11,407	11,409	12,104	The people supported by Council's Community Access and Support (CAS) programs include seniors, young people, people with a disability, and carers.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Greater sports participation rates.</b>	Number of teams using Council facilities.	Annual	1,157 (2020-21)	2,018	2,457	2,567	3,628	The figure includes hockey, tennis, Australian Rules football, soccer, cricket, netball, BMX, baseball, Rugby League and basketball. There are 2,535 basketball teams in the competition run by Knox Basketball Incorporated.
	Number of participants by age and gender.		Male - 12,310 Female - 3,745 Junior - 9,248 Senior - 6,807 (2020-21)	Male - 12,450 Female - 3,558 Junior - 9,142 Senior - 6,866	Male - 13,364 Female - 3,819 Junior - 9,639 Senior - 7,544	Male - 11,330 Female - 3,449 Junior - 8,993 Senior - 5,840	Male – 13,600 Female – 3,926 Junior – 9,726 Senior – 6,345	Participation numbers vary depending on the way the different sports and/or clubs report. For example, casual tennis, tennis coaching, and Auskick are not necessarily included.

## Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

*Provide opportunities for all people in Knox to have their say.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 5.1.1	<b>Implement priority actions of the Community Engagement Framework and Action Plan - Develop a program to grow Council's community engagement capability in response to the updated Community Engagement Policy.</b>	Completed	100%	The internal Community of Practice has now been formed with individual officers from across the organisation who undertake community engagement on a regular basis. Members have a responsibility for supporting and promoting community engagement within their teams and the wider organisation. At their first meeting on 21 May 2025 they identified the areas of community engagement practice to be a focus of development for the remainder of 2025 and committed to meeting monthly over this period. Through this group we will review and test the documented process to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation.	✓

*Manage our resources effectively to ensure financial sustainability and improved customer experience.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 5.2.2	<b>Implement Our Customer Strategy and Action Plan - Progress implementation of automated progress updates for customer requests, expand the Voice of the Customer program and deliver the initiatives in the third year of the digital roadmap.</b>	Completed	100%	Implementation of the year 2 actions of the Customer Strategy has further enhanced Knox's approach to integrating customer feedback and insights into the design and continuous improvement of services. In Q4 2024-25 the Voice of the Customer program was expanded across additional Community Laws services, including parking compliance, street trading, and neighbourhood safety and amenity. The complaints procedure reinforcement program was also completed, helping ensure that staff consistently follow best practice during the lodgement and management of customer complaints. Additionally, the Service Design capability uplift program concluded in Q4 2024-25. This program equipped staff with the tools and mindset to keep customers at the heart of everything while solving problems. These skills are now being applied to high-volume services, ensuring customers receive meaningful and timely updates through the Close the Loop platform.	✓

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 5.2.3	<b>Implement the Transformation Roadmap to ensure Knox Councils services, systems and processes meet our customers' needs and drive organisational financial sustainability - Progress the delivery of Year 2 transformation projects in line with the approved capital and operational budget allocation in 2024-25. (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	At the conclusion of the 2024-25 financial year, 19 projects have been completed, five in Q4 2024-25, which delivered a range of outcomes for customer and employee experience and reduced risk to Council. There are currently 31 projects in progress across five reported streams. Significant achievements in Q4 2024-25 include the completion of year 2 of the Service Planning Program, which has resulted in all 34 services across Council completing plans to deliver actions and improved customer experience; the creation of an online map of our capital works across Knox; and the completion of the new Council Health and Wellbeing Plan and of the annual budget for 2025-26. As at the end of May 2025, 65% of the capital budget had been spent.	✓

*Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.*

Code	Initiative - 2024-25 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Status Symbol
CP 5.3.6	<b>Conduct the 2024 General Election and implement a comprehensive induction program for the elected members - Work in concert with the Victorian Electoral Commission to support the delivery of the 2024 Council Elections, and work with internal and sector stakeholders to develop and deliver an induction program tailored to the needs of Councillors and in accordance with legislative requirements. (Major Initiative 2024-25)</b>	Completed	100%	The 2024 General Election has been completed with the election of nine Councillors for nine wards. A comprehensive Councillor Induction program was designed and delivered to ensure that all Councillors met the requirements set out in the Local Government Act 2020 and Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024. All Councillors have completed the induction program.	✓

### The difference we're making

Progress against the indicators identified in the *Council Plan 2021-25*.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved community satisfaction with decision-making.</b>	Improved community satisfaction with decision-making.	Annual	60 (2021)	58 (2022)	54 (2023)	69 (2024)	66 (2025)	Community satisfaction with Council's decision making declined somewhat in 2024-25 but remained measurably above the long-term average since 2014 of 60.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with customer service.</b>	Improved community satisfaction with customer service.	Annual	75 (2021)	73 (2022)	71 (2023)	78 (2024)	76 (2025)	Community satisfaction with Council's customer service declined slightly in 2024-25 but remained at a very good level, identical with the long-term average since 2014 of 76.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with overall direction.</b>	Community satisfaction score for overall direction.	Annual	54 (2021)	51 (2022)	48 (2023)	69 (2024)	66 (2025)	Community satisfaction with Council's overall direction declined somewhat in 2024-25 but remained measurably and significantly above the long-term average since 2014 of 55.
<b>Improved community satisfaction with overall performance.</b>	Community satisfaction score for overall performance.	Annual	69 (2021)	67 (2022)	62 (2023)	70 (2024)	68 (2025)	Community satisfaction with Council's overall performance declined slightly in 2024-25 but remained measurably higher than the unusually low 2023 result of 62.



Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
<b>Improved community satisfaction with consultation and engagement.</b>	Community satisfaction score for consultation and engagement.	Annual	58 (2021)	58 (2022)	53 (2023)	69 (2024)	69 (2025)	Satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement remained stable in 2024-25.
<b>More council services with a technology based self-service option.</b>	Number of council services with a technology based self-service option.	Annual	434 (2020-21)	439	456	484	517	Over the past 12 months we have continued to prioritise digital options for customers to self-serve on the Knox website. Increasing the number of Council services on the Knox website with a self-service option is a key direction of the Digital team. 33 new digital forms for Council services were created this financial year, including: applications for online residential parking permits, applications for property information certificates, book a Maternal Child Health appointment, and applications for range of local law permits, including roadside trading, garage a long or heavy vehicle, discharging fireworks, and event signage.

Council Plan Indicator	Measure	Reporting timeframe	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2024-25 Result	Comment
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<b>Meet liquidity and indebted targets from the adopted budget.</b>	Liquidity result compared to target.	Quarterly	1.0 (2021/22 Adopted Budget)	1.5 (Jun 2022)	1.6 (Jun 2023)	1.7 (Jun 2024)	1.51 (Jun 2025)	The liquidity result of 1.5 is lower than the June 2024 liquidity result of 1.7. Cash and cash equivalents, together with other financial assets, are \$10.2 million greater than last year, while trade and other receivables are up \$3.5 million. This has been offset by decreases in non-current assets classified as held for sale (\$4.1 million), and prepayments and contract assets (\$1.4 million), together with increases in trade and other payables (\$7.0 million), contract liabilities (\$3.0 million), and current interest-bearing liabilities \$1.2 million).
	Indebted result compared to target.		53.2% (2021/22 Adopted Budget)	38.8% (Jun 2022)	45.6% (Jun 2023)	47.6% (Jun 2024)	45.7% (Jun 2025)	The indebted result of 45.7% compares favourably with the June 2024 result of 47.6%. Own-source revenue increased, mainly through rates and charges which increased by \$4.5 million. A decrease in lease liabilities led to a decrease in non-current liabilities of \$0.5 million.



## Appendix 1: Incomplete Year 3 Council Plan Initiatives (2023-24)

At the conclusion of 2023-24 there were six Year 3 initiatives that were incomplete. The items behind schedule were primarily related to external factors outside of Council's control.

To ensure we are being fully transparent to our community on the progress of our Year 3 milestones, we have chosen to separate the incomplete initiatives in Year 3 from the Year 4 initiatives and continue to report on these until completion of the Year 3 milestones.

The progress below reflects the status of the key milestones for 2023-24, not necessarily the status of completion of the initiative overall, as many of the initiatives run over multiple years. The below Year 3 initiatives will be included in this appendix report until completion.

### Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.


**Maximise the local economy by supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.**

Code	Initiative - 2023-24 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Traffic Lights
CP 1.1.4	<b>Incomplete 2023-24 initiative: Continue to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of future economic development initiatives - Develop a draft economic plan informed by data gathered from the evaluation of the reporting framework.</b>	Behind schedule	60%	The Senior Strategic Investment officer has completed the initial research to support the development of an economic development plan. A consultant has been engaged to gain insight and an understanding of one of Knox's industrial areas, with a report now due in mid-August 2025. The report has been delayed by the introduction of a full business survey of the area. This pilot project seeks to give officers a clear understanding of the industrial precinct, an overview of the economic impact of the precinct and of the future opportunities and challenges. This information will help to inform a draft economic development plan.	

## Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

*Preserve our biodiversity and waterways, and enhance our urban landscape.*

Code	Initiative - 2023-24 Milestone	Status	Progress	Comments	Traffic Lights
CP 3.1.3	<b>Incomplete 2023-24 initiative: Develop a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for Knox.</b>	Behind schedule	80%	Delivery of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan was deferred from 2023-2024 due to uncertainty regarding the legislative requirement for the plan. The need for a plan was confirmed by the State Government in June 2024. Consultants have been retained to facilitate the preparation of the Knox City Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP). The Geographic Information System (GIS) data is being cleansed and the wastewater areas and properties are being assessed for risk. The plan is scheduled for completion by the end of the 2025-2026 financial year.	

## 8.3 Knox Connection Access Respect Equality Safety (CARES) Strategy - Mid-Term Review 2022-2027

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Noting
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### SUMMARY

The Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety (Knox CARES) Strategy 2022-2027 was approved by Council in September 2022. The Strategy outlines the critical role that Council plays in continuing to build a healthy, safe and inclusive community. The Strategy acknowledges that there are a range of factors that may influence how community members access opportunities at home, at work, in learning, and in the community.

This report provides a mid-way review of key achievements and progress against each of the actions, considerations, and opportunities for the remainder of the implementation period.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to receive and note this Mid-Term Review of the Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety (Knox CARES) Strategy 2022-2027.

## 1. DISCUSSION

### 1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Strategy

The Knox CARES Strategy draws upon an integrated planning approach and brings together more than six discrete action plans previously developed and approved by Council. This approach promotes an intersectional focus for the work undertaken by Officers, ensuring that complex and overlapping forms of disadvantage are considered. The Strategy also fulfills the legislative requirement for Council to have a Disability Action Plan.





The Strategy contains 54 actions across five themes listed below, which were developed in consultation with community members and Council officers:

- Knox leads and advocates for inclusion.
- Knox promotes safety in the community.
- Knox supports people in need.
- Knox embraces diversity.
- Knox strives to be a liveable community.

### 1.2 Progress Summary

The Knox CARES Strategy addresses a range of systemic social challenges across key demographics and policy areas. The Strategy has been developed with an understanding of the role Council (Local Government) plays in addressing these challenges.

Overall, the Knox CARES actions are on track with 96% of actions either On Schedule or Complete. A full progress update is provided as Attachment 1 to this report:

Completed		6	Progress against this action item has been completed. Reporting against this action item will not be required for future reporting periods.
On Schedule		46	Progress against an action item is fully on track for this reporting period of July 2022 to June 2025. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods as designated.
Behind Schedule		2	Progress against this action item has partially met the scheduled timeline for this reporting period. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods.
Not Started		0	This action item has not been started within the identified time due to reasons described in the progress comments. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods as designated.
<b>TOTAL ACTIONS</b>		<b>54</b>	

Details of the two actions behind schedule is listed below:

- Action 5.2: “Develop and implement the Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan” is behind schedule. However, work continues to be undertaken on this Action. The Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan will be presented to Council at a future meeting for endorsement.
- Action 5.5: “Explore opportunities to embed the principles of access and equity in the development and delivery of Council’s Open Space Asset Management Plan” is behind schedule. However, background work is being undertaken which will inform the development of the Open Space Strategy.

### 1.3 Key Highlights – Case Studies

A review of the Strategy was undertaken, and an update provided on each action (see Attachment 1). Below is a series of case studies that illustrate key achievements over the previous three years, including:

<b>Food Relief in Knox: The Outer East Foodshare Food Hub</b>	<p><b>Action 3.1: Identify, develop and lead strategic committees or forums that enhance service coordination and collaboration</b></p> <p>Food insecurity is an issue of growing need across the nation as communities face increasing financial hardship with cost-of-living pressures. In January 2023, Council convened the Knox Food Relief Taskforce which brought together over 30 local food relief providers to consider collaboration and coordination opportunities.</p> <p>A key achievement of the Knox Food Relief Taskforce has been the establishment of the Outer East Foodshare Food Hub. Located in a Council owned facility in Wantirna, the Hub has grown over the first three years of the Knox CARES strategy and now supports 46 Outer East food relief providers.</p>
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	<p>Accessing the Hub and attending Taskforce meetings has allowed food relief providers to share resources and collaborate, as their knowledge base and networking opportunities have grown. The work of the Taskforce also supported Knox's submission into the Victorian Inquiry into Food Security in 2024. At its meeting in April 2025, Council endorsed a five-year lease agreement for Outer East Foodshare (OEFS) to continue operating from their current site at Templeton Orchards Preschool. This has provided OEFS with longer term security regarding their facility that will enable them to continue to support the Knox community.</p>
<b>Supporting Carers in Knox</b>	<p><b>Action 4.10: Partner with community to deliver recognition events for people with a disability and carers, to share stories and shape community attitudes</b></p> <p>Knox is home to 17,000 unpaid carers. Whilst caring can be a rewarding experience, it can bring many challenges including financial hardship, impacts on personal health and wellbeing, or social isolation.</p> <p>Council continues to facilitate regular events and programs for carers. Pathways for Carers is one of these programs, with approximately 12 carers attending a monthly walking group and presentation of a guest speaker at Coonara Community House. This is a space for carers to gather, learn and connect with each other.</p> <p>Weekly exercise classes are also provided at Knox Leisureworks, with up to 20 people attending each week. This provides carers an opportunity to connect, share stories and support each other. Regular webinars for carers and parents on topics related to access and inclusion are also provided.</p> <p>In March 2024, in partnership with Carers Victoria, Council hosted a Carers Mingle event at the Knox Civic Centre. Seventy-nine carers attended the event which included a meal, fun activities, stallholders with information and entertainment from Kate Jones from the popular podcast "Too Peas in a Podcast". Kate gave a heart-warming and informative speech about her caring journey.</p>
<b>Progressing Reconciliation and Truth Telling in Knox</b>	<p><b>Action 1.4: Develop and implement the first Knox Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to enhance Council's capacity to build recognition and respect with First Nations community</b></p> <p>In 2023, Council launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP contains 72 actions involving collaboration across Council to embed reconciliation and truth telling in everything we do. An internal RAP working group was established earlier in 2024, with 13 staff representing a range of Departments.</p> <p>Council continues its commitment to truth telling and healing through the annual Sorry Day event. The successful running of the 2025 Sorry Day</p>

	<p>event marked 20 years of this commitment, recognising the ongoing impact of the Stolen Generation for First Nations people including here in Knox.</p> <p>Since Knox CARES was endorsed in 2022, there are now 22 Aboriginal housing properties in Knox and there is an increased presence of Aboriginal controlled and specific services in Knox.</p> <p>Work continues across Council to embed First Nations acknowledgement and education across areas such as Communications, Arts and Events and citizenship ceremonies.</p>
<b>Early Years Professional Development Sessions</b>	<p><b>Action 3.2: Build the capacity of community organisations, families and carers to address barriers facing people with a disability</b></p> <p>Many families face barriers in accessing early years settings that meet their needs and the needs of their children. Council plays an important role in supporting and addressing access and inclusion issues affecting children with disabilities or developmental delays.</p> <p>Council delivers disability specific professional development sessions to early years services, aiming to increase the capacity of staff to enable successful inclusion of all children across Knox's universal early years' services.</p> <p>Knox delivered five early years professional development sessions in the 2024-25 financial year. Topics include planning impacts of trauma on development, understanding inclusion supports, understanding children with cerebral palsy and self-regulation through physical development.</p> <p>In October 2024, 24 Early Years Educators attended a professional development session at the Knox Civic Centre. It focused on practical strategies to engage children with disabilities in art play. Art organisation Art Friends delivered an informative and hands-on session for the early years educators. Staff had an opportunity to learn new techniques and trial strategies to engage children with disabilities in art play within their early years' settings.</p>
<b>Increasing Social Connections – “Keeping It Reel”</b>	<p><b>Action 5.3: Continue to explore opportunities to strengthen the accessibility of Council and community run events, for people with reduced mobility, neurodiversity and other barriers to participation</b></p> <p>Social connection is a key element and focus of the Knox CARES Strategy and the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. Older men have an increased vulnerability to being socially disconnected, experiencing loneliness and have a decreased likelihood of participating in a community-based club or associations.</p> <p>The “Keeping It Reel” program was a piloted a free fishing program that sought to increase the social participation of older men living in Knox. The</p>



	<p>trips were a part of the Victorian Seniors Festival and took place in October 2024. The theme for the 2024 Festival was “Explore. Engage. Evolve” and encouraged older Victorians to stay connected by exploring new activities.</p> <p>The men who participated had limited or no social connections, lived alone and had existing barriers that impacted on their participation in other social programs. The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive. For some, the fishing outings were the highlight of the week and in fact, has led to self-organised future fishing outings together, upon conclusion of the program.</p> <p>This program was recently awarded a “High Commendation” at the 2025 LGPro Awards for Positive Ageing and Wellbeing.</p>
<b>Family Violence Prevention: “Are You Safe at Home? Day” Webinar</b>	<p><b>Action 2.3: Partner with specialist services and organisations to deliver family violence primary prevention programs and projects in Knox, targeting priority cohorts such as men and culturally diverse communities</b></p> <p>In February 2024, Council was awarded funding for a three-year Free From Violence project to support family violence prevention initiatives. This project looks at both internal and external capacity building and educating the community through proven best practice initiatives.</p> <p>In May 2025, Knox partnered with Monash and Maroondah Councils to hold a webinar for ‘Are You Safe at Home? Day’. The webinar explored the rights of victim survivors of family violence and focused on how to navigate support services, including legal, housing, financial and recovery.</p> <p>A total of 159 people engaged with the webinar through live participation and watching the recording as of 4 June 2025. The recording remains publicly available. At the end of the webinar, attendees were asked to complete an anonymous and confidential evaluation. The responses showed an increase in understanding and knowledge about family violence, as well as an increase in where to find and access support services. This is one key example of the work Knox is doing in partnership, working towards addressing and preventing family violence.</p>

#### 1.4 Key Learnings and Opportunities

In the first three years of delivery on the Knox CARES Strategy, key learnings have been identified, including:

- The streamlined planning approach bringing together six strategic documents into one combined strategy has simplified the approach to planning and delivery.
- The review of each key focus area has highlighted that these continue to remain areas of heightened community need and action from Council.

- Knox CARES has provided a strong basis for advocacy on social issues and reforms, allowing staff to respond in a timely way to calls for submissions.
- Utilising Council's reporting system has streamlined reporting and monitoring of the Strategy, providing a central point of coordination for progress updates to be compiled on an annual basis.
- Delivering several standout outcomes, such as those highlighted in the Case Studies above.

Over the remaining 2.5 years, the following priorities have been identified to support and strengthen delivery of Knox CARES Strategy actions:

- Foster meaningful involvement from Council Advisory Committees;
- Continue to pursue and strengthen both internal and external partnerships;
- Identify and obtain external funding to progress Council's work; and
- Continue to deliver on the Knox CARES Strategy, aligned with the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, which integrates eight health and wellbeing priorities across the organisation.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

The Knox CARES Strategy was developed through consultation and engagement with the Knox community, including Council Advisory Committees. There is ongoing engagement occurring to guide the implementation of Knox CARES and its actions. Recent consultation has taken place to inform development of an Alcohol Harm Prevention Statement of Commitment and the Prevention of Family Violence Statement of Commitment.

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 engagement has also recently been undertaken to inform and set clear direction, including for the health and wellbeing priorities that closely align and support themes within the Knox CARES Strategy. In addition, staff embed feedback opportunities in the delivery of events, activities and initiatives to guide future program delivery and strategic planning.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The midterm review of Knox CARES Strategy has highlighted a range of positive social impacts for the Knox community. Actions undertaken as part of delivering on the Strategy have increased the profile of Knox's diverse community, and provided increased opportunities for community participation, skill development and social inclusion.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the Strategy is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation. The Strategy recognises that some groups may be disproportionately impacted by climate change and its impacts on health, and the increased in associated extreme weather events, and encourages this to be considered for emergency management and emergency recovery plans.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The Knox CARES Strategy is funded within the existing operational budgets and staff resources, primarily in the Connected Communities Directorate. Some actions within the Strategy are reliant on access to external funding. Sourcing external funding to support and strengthen Councils commitment will need to be a key focus for all Departments responsible for actions in the remaining years of the Strategy.

## **7. RISKS**

Risks associated with the delivery of actions included in the Knox CARES Strategy are considered by the responsible Department(s) as part of the project management process when implemented. A range of related legislative and policy considerations are identified in Appendix 1 of the Action Plan.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources**

- Strategy 1.1 A variety of transport options are available through the effective planning, advocacy and management of efficient, sustainable and accessible transport modes, particularly in growth locations.
- Strategy 1.2 Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.
- Strategy 1.3 Local businesses and our economy are strong and resilient and there are increased employment opportunities through development, attracting investment, embracing technology and innovation, and advocacy.
- Strategy 1.4 Access to affordable and nutritious food is enhanced through advocacy and working in partnership with relevant organisations to raise awareness and promote available community programs.
- Strategy 1.5 Our community's health and wellbeing is improved through proactive planning, delivery, partnerships and advocacy that enable access to services, education and programs.

### **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity**

- Strategy 2.1 Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.
- Strategy 2.2 Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.
- Strategy 2.3 Our community is supported to thrive during all stages of life through the promotion and provision of services, advocacy and partnerships with local service providers.
- Strategy 2.4 There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

### **Caring for and enhancing our environment**

- Strategy 3.1 Our environment is healthy and sustainable by considering environmental factors when planning for and making decisions.
- Strategy 3.2 Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.

### **Leading, listening and governing responsibly**

- Strategy 4.1 Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

- Strategy 4.2 Our diverse community is informed and has opportunities to participate and provide feedback through clear and meaningful communication and engagement,
- Strategy 4.3 Council services are efficient and optimised through ongoing improvement, and focused investment in innovation, technology and capability.
- Strategy 4.4 The changing needs of our community are met through informed policy and strategy that maximises value, collaboration and partnerships with other councils and local organisations.

**Being a strong voice for safety**

- Strategy 5.1 Our community feels safer in public spaces and facilities through planning, maintenance, education, design and proactive program delivery for Council-owned or -managed spaces and via advocacy for others.
- Strategy 5.2 Safety and liveability are prioritised through the planning, delivery and enforcement of local laws and regulatory services.
- Strategy 5.3 Our community is more secure, connected and feel less isolated through planning, partnerships, advocacy and targeted support for our most vulnerable.
- Strategy 5.4 People feel safe in their homes and in the community through the development of partnerships, planning and promotion of programs, services and education that focus on connection, safety and respect.
- Strategy 5.5 Our community is resilient in the face of emergencies through planning, education, emergency response and support.

**Planning our future city**

- Strategy 6.1 There is improved access to a diverse range of housing options through effective planning, advocacy, and identifying opportunities for social and affordable housing supply.
- Strategy 6.2 High quality, integrated community services and facilities are available through planning and design that responds to population growth and our community's changing needs.
- Strategy 6.3 Our community's expectations and aspirations for housing development and land use are considered through planning, advocacy, partnerships and decision-making.
- Strategy 6.4 Our community's expectations and aspirations for housing development and land use are considered through planning, advocacy, partnerships and decision-making.

**9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

**10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

The Knox CARES Strategy is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and recognises rights as a central principle of social impact. Supporting access and inclusion may relate to several sections of the Charter of Human Rights, including: the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (Section 14); right to freedom of expression (Section 15); right to take part in public life (Section 18); and cultural rights (Section 19).

Child Safety issues are considered in the delivery of actions and initiatives outlined within the Knox CARES Strategy.

Equity Impact Assessments are considered by the responsible Officers when programs, services and policies identified in the Knox CARES Strategy actions are initiated.

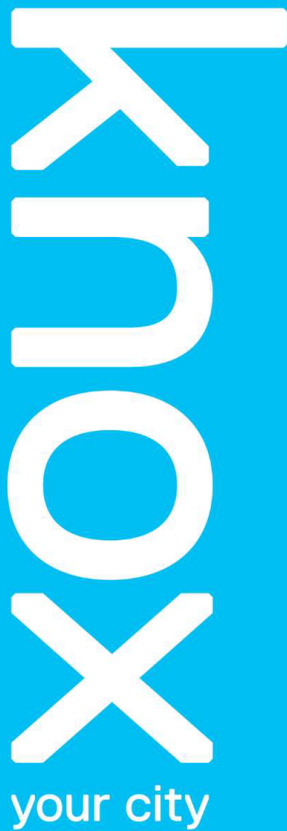
## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Knox CARES midterm review June 2025 [**8.3.1** - 82 pages]

**Attachment 1**



**Mid-Term Review:  
Knox Connection, Access, Respect,  
Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-2027**

June 2025



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

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## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Background

The Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27 (Knox CARES) outlines the critical role that Council can play in continuing to build a healthy, safe and inclusive community. It has supported the delivery of the Knox Council Plan 2021-25 and Community Vision by applying an equity lens and liveability framework to Council work. It has also informed the development of the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

The Strategy acknowledges that there are a range of factors that may influence how community members access opportunities at home, at work, in learning, and in the community. The actions are focused on elevating the needs of Knox's priority populations. It respects the lived experience and strength of all individuals in our diverse community, regardless of their gender, race, culture, sexuality, religion, abilities, family type, income level, or any other factor or circumstance.

Knox CARES supports Council's legislative responsibilities including:

- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities;
- Disability Act 2006;
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010;
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001; and
- Gender Equality Act 2020.

This Strategy also fulfills the legislative requirement for Council to have a Disability Action Plan.

Knox CARES draws upon an integrated planning approach, bringing together more than six discrete action plans previously developed and endorsed by Council. This approach promotes an intersectional focus to the work undertaken by officers, ensuring that complex and overlapping forms of disadvantage are considered.

The mid-way point of the Strategy (June 2025) presents an opportunity to review the Strategy's implementation. The purpose of this report is to document the review and consider key achievements so far, and identify challenges, opportunities and priorities for the remainder of the implementation period.





## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Scope of the Strategy





The Knox CARES Strategy is centred around five themes that emerged in consultation with community members, Advisory Committee representatives and Council officers. These are:

Theme	Aspiration	What would success look like?
 <b>Knox leads and advocates for inclusion</b>	We lead by example to ensure that our own organisation models fairness and inclusion, and we advocate to uphold human rights and social justice in Knox.	Knox is seen as a diverse, inclusive and respectful community. Our planning is based on current evidence of community need and priorities. We amplify the voices of those in our community who may not otherwise be heard. We identify and pursue opportunities to partner and collaborate. Our organisation is a safe place for people to bring their whole selves to work.
 <b>Knox promotes safety in the community</b>	People in Knox feel safe in their home and their neighbourhood and have a positive sense of belonging to their community.	Improved perceptions of safety amongst Knox residents. Increased satisfaction with community safety (Municipal survey). Enhanced family violence information and support for Knox residents. Reduction in alcohol related hospitalisations and injuries.
 <b>Knox supports people in need</b>	We recognise that not all people have equal access to opportunities, and we seek to support people experiencing short- or long-term vulnerability	Monitoring and responding to the evolving needs of our community, including those experiencing vulnerability. Building partnerships to strengthen the reach of Council's work. Identifying and responding to gaps in services and supports to ensure no one is left behind.
 <b>Knox embraces diversity</b>	Knox embraces diversity and welcomes all people, regardless of gender, race, culture, sexuality, age, income level, family type or level of ability	Using various awareness and recognition events to raise the profile of Knox as a diverse and inclusive community. Strengthened trust and connections across diverse groups. Community members of all backgrounds and identities see themselves reflected in Council's print and electronic media. Diverse voices are represented in our engagement processes and community life more broadly.
 <b>Knox strives to be a liveable community</b>	People in Knox are supported to live, learn, work and socialise through access to facilities, services, open spaces and opportunities, regardless of their circumstances or background	It is easier for our community to physically move around the municipality. Our community has access to the facilities and resources they need. A range of sporting, cultural and recreational opportunities are available for all. Our community is engaged, active and resilient.

## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Overview of progress

The below table summarises the progress against the Knox CARES actions following the first three years of implementation:

Completed		6	Progress against this Action item has been completed.  Reporting against this Action item will not be required for future reporting periods.
On Schedule		46	Progress against an Action item is fully on track for this reporting period of July 2022 to June 2025.  Reporting will continue for this Action item for future reporting periods as designated.
Behind Schedule		2	Progress against this Action item has partially met the scheduled timeline for this reporting period.  Reporting will continue for this Action item for future reporting periods.
Not Started		0	This Action item has not been started in the identified time due to reasons described in the progress comments.  Reporting will continue for this Action item for future reporting periods as designated.
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>54</b>	

Action 5.2: 'Develop and implement the Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan' is behind schedule however work continues to be undertaken on this Action. The Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan will be presented at a Council meeting, followed by endorsement by Council.

Action 5.5: 'Explore opportunities to embed the principles of access and equity in the development and delivery of Council's Open Space Asset Management Plan' is behind schedule. However, background work is being undertaken which will inform the development of the Open Space Strategy.

Key achievements are summarised in the section below. Overall, the Strategy is tracking well, with 96% of actions either on schedule or completed. Where action progress is noted as behind schedule (as of June 2025), it will be completed within the active life of this Strategy. Furthermore, some actions are subject to external funding being secured. A full acquittal of each action within the Strategy is included as Appendix A.



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Our Impact Areas

The Knox CARES Strategy was developed in 2021-22, and based on significant community consultation, research and an acknowledgement of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Across the Strategy's 11 impact areas, there has been significant change during this time. Local government has an important role to play in each of these identified impact areas, however, there are contributing factors that impact the delivery and outcomes in these areas, including partnership with stakeholders and the influence of legislation and policy reform at both State and Federal levels.

The Table below provides a summary of external influences or changes in the time since the Strategy was developed, as well as highlighting key achievements between July 2022 and June 2025:

<b>People with disability</b>	<p>The Victorian Disability Act has been under review since 2022, with expected reforms in 2025 including Disability Impact Assessments for public services. Knox has already responded to this by adopting broader Equity Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Federally, following the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review (2023) and the Disability Royal Commission (2023), reforms began rolling out in 2024, including Foundational Supports, new service commissioning, and stronger safeguarding. The National Disability Employment Strategy progressed into implementation, targeting inclusive jobs and reforms to the Disability Employment Services program. Continued investment in assistive technology, digital inclusion, and climate resilience supported independence and access. Efforts to address health and aged care interfaces also expanded.</p> <p>Across all levels, there was a clear shift toward lived experience and co-design, with greater involvement of organisations that support people with disability in shaping inclusive policy and service delivery.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued provision of professional development for early years educators in disability awareness and inclusion practice.</li> <li>Successful Mental Health Carer Forum co-designed with carers and delivered in Mental Health week October 2024.</li> <li>Continued provision of social and active carer events providing opportunity for connection and information sharing.</li> <li>Continued provision of webinars and information sessions for families and carers on a range of disability topics.</li> </ul>
<b>First Nations people</b>	<p>The First Nations communities were significantly impacted by the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum. The campaign exposed deep divisions, racism, and misinformation, impacting community strengthening and the delivery of work</p>



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

	<p>with First Nations communities. Alongside this, Closing the Gap targets on incarceration, child removals, and mental health remained off track, and Aboriginal organisations faced funding insecurity. Despite these setbacks, there was growing momentum in local truth-telling and Treaty processes, especially in Victoria through the Yoorrook Justice Commission and the First Peoples' Assembly.</p> <p>Local governments continued advancing Reconciliation Action Plans, cultural governance, and support for First Nations-led initiatives, reaffirming their role in truth, justice, and community healing in a post-referendum environment. This continues to affect Knox Council in the work being done in community, as well as working toward cultural safety in the organisation as a workplace.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was launched in 2023, with the endorsement of Reconciliation Australia. The RAP will be in place for two years', 2023- 2025 and is based on conversation with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Elders and local First Nations communities.</li> <li>• A continued commitment to truth telling and healing through annual Sorry Day events, with 2025 marking 20 years of this commitment, recognising the ongoing impact of the Stolen Generation for First Nations people including here in Knox.</li> <li>• There are now 22 Aboriginal housing properties in Knox.</li> <li>• Increased presence of Aboriginal controlled and specific services in Knox.</li> <li>• In 2022-2023, a short-term Project Officer was employed to explore opportunities to progress opportunities for First Nations employment and procurement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities</b></p>	<p>In 2023, the Federal Government reviewed the Multicultural Framework to enhance social cohesion and support new migrants, with Knox City Council leading a regional submission alongside Monash, Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges Councils. This Review aligns with federal efforts to improve access to services for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.</p> <p>Concurrently, the Victorian Government advanced its Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Strategy 2021-2024, focusing on health, education, and COVID-19 Pandemic recovery for CALD groups through targeted funding and programs.</p> <p>Knox remains home to a growing CALD population, including those who have been settled in Knox for several years and are now experiencing new challenges as they age; as well as new arrivals from countries such as Myanmar and Sri Lanka.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of the 'Growing Your Community Group' program for CALD groups.</li> <li>• National Refugee Week events hosted for community and staff across</li> </ul>



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

	<p>2023, 2024, and in June 2025. Events included a series of video profiles shared on social media, partnering with Knox Library, a Multicultural Networking event, and internal staff capacity building sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training and resources to support the use of translated information and engagement with interpreters when required.</li> <li>• Successfully hosted National Cultural Diversity week community events in 2024 and 2025. Events included a cultural festival and an intergenerational cultural community day.</li> </ul>
<b>LGBTIQA+ Communities</b>	<p>In 2023, several Local Government Areas experienced community backlash ahead of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), with some councils cancelling events. Members of LGBTIQA+ communities reported increased discrimination and safety concerns. This highlights the ongoing need for inclusion, education, and awareness initiatives.</p> <p>The State Government advanced the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 and strengthened protections under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 to improve safety and inclusivity. State and federal policies and funding during this period have shaped local government responses, reinforcing the importance of collaborative efforts to protect and empower LGBTIQA+ communities. Work in Knox in this space continues to be creating an inclusive environment for all, especially through LGBTIQA+ youth programs and initiatives.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe delivery of IDAHOBIT, Pride March and Wear it Purple Day awareness events in 2023, 2024 and Pride March and IDAHOBIT events in 2025.</li> <li>• Strong engagement by young people in an array of programs and groups for LGBTIQA+ young people and their families, including Free 2 Be Me, 4Me, Emerge, Queer Collective, Knox Rainbow Youth Action Group and parents of LGBTIQA+ young people.</li> <li>• Development and distribution of 100 'Pride Packs' to promote safe places for LGBTIQA+ community in Knox.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Safety</b>	<p>During the 2022-2025 period, Knox experienced periodic reports of antisocial behaviour in localised 'hot spots'. While criminal incidents declined between 2020 and 2022, a 14.4% increase was recorded in the year ending December 2023, though levels remain below the 2019 peak. Theft of and from motor vehicles remains the most reported offence. Council's Safer Communities Officers work with residents and Victoria Police using a place-based approach that acknowledges the trauma of crime.</p> <p>At the State level, the Victorian Government's Crime Prevention Strategy and Community Safety Fund have supported targeted safety initiatives. Federally, the Safer Communities Fund has provided resources for crime prevention. These external supports help address local safety issues while promoting more responsive, collaborative crime prevention efforts across Knox.</p>



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	<p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully delivered the Empowering Communities projects, led and co-designed by community.</li> <li>• Reduction in reported concerns at the Ferntree Gully Quarry between the summer period in 2023 and 2024.</li> <li>• Ongoing partnership with Victoria Police including through the Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Reduction in reported concerns at Fairpark Reserve in the second half of 2024 after community safety interventions were introduced.</li> <li>• Advocacy to Victoria Police to re-instate the Crime Prevention Officer at Knox Police Station</li> </ul>
<b>Family violence</b>	<p>Knox continues to experience the highest reported rate of family violence incidents in the outer east, with the number of reported incidents growing year on year since 2018-19.</p> <p>Both the Victorian and Australian governments advanced reforms to address family violence. Victoria's Free from Violence Second Action Plan 2022–2025 focused on prevention, intersectionality, and lived experience.</p> <p>Federally, the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032 committed \$3.4 billion to prevention and response efforts. A Federal inquiry also called for national consistency in family violence protection orders.</p> <p>These initiatives reflect deepening commitments while highlighting gaps in funding and service equity. With Knox being funded to deliver the Free from Violence program, Council continues to work toward the prevention of gender-based violence.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox received funding from the Victorian State Government to implement the Free From Violence Local Government Program initiative for 3 years (2024-2027) to ensure family violence prevention work is considered across a whole of Council approach.</li> <li>• Staff training and engagement delivered, including 3Rs of Family Violence and Active Bystander Training, to embed family violence and gender equality practice across Council.</li> <li>• Participation in key awareness raising campaigns across the last three years, including 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Are You Safe at Home? Day.</li> <li>• Education and capacity building initiatives for Knox community - working with the broader community through training such as 3Rs of Family Violence, and working on targeted training for specific cohorts such as sporting club members, parents of young people, new parents, dads, CALD communities.</li> <li>• Promoting help seeking behaviours through education posters and help</li> </ul>



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	cards promoted through Council building and provided to partners such as community houses, libraries, and leisure centres.
<b>Housing</b>	<p>Housing has become a significant community concern for Knox in recent years, for a range of reasons. These include a shortfall in available housing, increasing housing costs due to rising interest rates and increasing rental payments. The Victorian Government's Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead 2024–2034 set a target to build 800,000 homes, introducing planning reforms that shift some powers from local councils to the State to streamline development. Legal reforms, including the Housing Statement Reform Bill 2024, aimed to address supply shortages amid rising housing costs caused by interest rate increases and construction sector challenges. Other State Government policies such as Plan for Victoria continues to affect Knox both as an organisation and as a community. Council continues to advocate for more social and affordable housing.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued active participation of the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA), Knox secured funding and led a research project on Preventing Homelessness in older women. This project identified potential housing options and models for this high-risk cohort.</li> <li>Collaborative efforts continue among councils through the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group.</li> <li>Social and Affordable Housing Strategy continues to be implemented.</li> <li>Council officers from a cross section of teams, such as Community Strengthening, Short Term Support and Early Years have supported the new Community Housing Project at 500 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South to connect with residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<p>Mental health remained a significant concern in Knox. According to the 2021 Census, 8.7% of Knox residents reported a mental health condition, second only to asthma at 8.9%.</p> <p>The demand for mental health services continued to rise, while funding cuts led to reduced service availability. Notably, the walk-in mental health hub established in Boronia during the pandemic has since closed, representing a significant service loss for the community.</p> <p>The Victorian Government introduced the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local initiative, in late 2022, aiming to provide accessible support to individuals aged 26 and over. Additionally, the Australian Government's National Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy was developed to guide national efforts in improving mental health services and outcomes. The work done at Federal and State level continue to influence Knox's current and future work in this space.</p> <p><b>Key Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health information sessions delivered to different community groups including Chinese women with Women's Health East, and sporting clubs</li> </ul>



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	<p>including topics such as healthy masculinities with the 'Man Box'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Month has been marked in October each year in various ways including social media campaigns, social connection events and webinars, where possible in partnership with multiple agencies such as Your Library and Knox Leisureworks.</li> <li>• Mental Health First Aid Training was delivered to Knox volunteers in June 2025 to support the efforts of volunteers who work with community members, particularly those engaged with the Knox Emergency Relief Network.</li> </ul>
<b>Alcohol and other drugs</b>	<p>Alcohol and other drugs remained a significant concern impacting community safety, and health outcomes in Victoria. The rapid expansion of largely unregulated alcohol home delivery services raised ongoing concerns from local advisory bodies. Reflecting these challenges, the Victorian Government included reducing alcohol and drug use as one of the ten priorities in the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–27. This Plan acknowledges the strong connection between substance use and preventable illness and injury. Council is committed to reducing harm from alcohol as is reflected in the current Council Plan as a health priority and has been identified as a health and wellbeing priority in the next Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.</p> <p><b>Key Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing VicHealth funding in 2022, to support the development of a Knox Community Alcohol Harm Profile with current data and trends relating to alcohol consumption in Knox.</li> <li>• Positive engagement with the Knox Liquor Accord to support responsible service of alcohol in licensed venues across Knox.</li> <li>• Worked with Sport and Leisure teams to run a session through the Australian Drug Foundation on alcohol prevention in sports clubs in early 2025.</li> <li>• Active involvement from key agencies who work to reduce alcohol harm in Knox, in the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Developed and endorsed a Statement of Commitment for Reducing Alcohol Harm.</li> </ul>
<b>Gambling</b>	<p>In March 2023, new advertising rules replaced the longstanding “gamble responsibly” tagline with stronger, impact-focused warnings such as “What are you really gambling with?” and “Chances are you’re about to lose.” These changes aimed to increase public awareness of the risks associated with gambling. Despite regulatory efforts, anecdotal reports from local services indicate that online betting and gambling, which surged during the COVID-19 Pandemic, have remained at elevated levels.</p> <p>Council is committed to reducing harm from gambling and as such it has been identified as a health and wellbeing priority in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29. Knox is also working to support our community on</p>





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	<p>addressing gambling harm through the work detailed in the key achievements below.</p> <p><b>Key Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gambling Harm Awareness Week – Chinese seniors in 2023, public stall at Knox Westfield in 2024.</li> <li>• Conducted a review of research and data to inform a review of Council's Electronic Gaming Machine policy.</li> <li>• Active involvement from key agencies who work to reduce gambling harm in Knox, in the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Gambling has been included as a key health and wellbeing priority in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial and food security</b>	<p>Food insecurity is an issue of growing concern across the nation, as communities face increasing financial hardship with cost-of-living pressures, including escalating grocery costs, higher utility costs, increasing rents and consecutive interest rate rises. These economic pressures have strained household budgets, affecting the affordability of groceries, housing, medical care, petrol, and utilities.</p> <p>In response, the Victorian Government initiated a Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in 2023, aiming to better understand and address food access challenges across the State. Knox prepared a submission into this inquiry. The inquiry complements the Victorian Food Relief Framework, which supports partnerships with community organisations to enhance food security.</p> <p>Knox communities continue to tell us that they are impacted by the high cost of living pressures, and food relief agencies continue to work and volunteer to support our local community.</p> <p><b>Key achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of the Knox Food Relief Taskforce, and delivery of associated collaborative projects including the pilot of the Outer East Foodshare food distribution hub.</li> <li>• The pilot of Outer East Foodshare has been extremely successful, Council has recommended and endorsed that a 5-year lease be signed with Outer East Foodshare at their current location.</li> <li>• Enhanced data collection and insight to inform advocacy efforts, including a service user survey which provided valuable insight into the level of reliance on food relief services.</li> <li>• Submission into the Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in 2023. Knox Council, was one of three Council, invited to speak to the Panel on its submission.</li> </ul>



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Case studies

The following case studies are illustrative of the significant positive impact of key initiatives delivered under the Knox CARES Strategy from July 2022 to June 2025.

#### Food Relief in Knox: The Outer East Foodshare Food Hub

##### **Action 3.1 Identify, develop and lead strategic committees or forums that enhance service coordination and collaboration**

Food insecurity is an issue of growing need across the nation as communities face increasing financial hardship with cost-of-living pressures and are impacted daily by escalating grocery costs, higher utility costs, increasing rents and consecutive interest rate rises. Knox City Council undertook an audit of food relief providers in 2022 to profile the service response at the community level. In January 2023, Council convened the Knox Food Relief Taskforce which brought together over 30 local food relief providers to consider opportunities for an effective coordinated response to growing community need and to increasing issues of supply and demand of food supplies in food relief services.

A key achievement of the Knox Food Relief Taskforce has been the establishment of the Outer East Foodshare (OEFS) Food Hub. Located in a Council-owned facility in Wantirna, the Hub has grown over the first three years of the Knox CARES Strategy. It supports 46 Outer East food relief providers, with majority located in Knox (25), followed by Yarra Ranges (11) and Maroondah (10). The number of food relief providers the hub supports grew from 6 to 46 organisation. The number of volunteers grew from 7 to 43 and the drivers grew from 3 to 14, delivering 250-300 volunteer hours per week. The hub food supplies received per month went from 400kgs to 26 tonnes.

Accessing the Hub and attending Taskforce meetings has allowed food relief providers to share resources and collaborate, as their knowledge base and networking opportunities have grown. The work of the Taskforce also supported Knox's submission into the Victorian Inquiry into Food Security 2024. At its meeting in April 2025, Council endorsed a 5-year lease agreement for Outer East Foodshare to continue operating from their current site at Templeton Orchards Preschool. This has provided OEFS with longer term security in regard to their facility that will enable continued support to the Knox community.





## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Supporting Carers in Knox

#### **Action 4.10 Partner with community to deliver recognition events for people with a disability and their carers, to share stories and shape community attitudes**

In Knox we have 17,000 unpaid carers in the community. This is approximately 1 in 9 people. There are many rewards for people who provide unpaid care for a family member or friend including developing a new skill and strengthening the relationship with the person they care for. There are also many challenges including financial hardship, impacts on personal health and wellbeing, social isolation and disadvantage. Many carers can miss out on important life opportunities including paid work, a career and education. Caring can take the freedom and spontaneity out of life.

The Disability Inclusion Team deliver recognition events and programs for people with disability and carers. In March 2024, in partnership with Carers Victoria, Council hosted a Carers Mingle at the Knox Civic Centre. The evening included a meal, fun activities, stallholders and information and entertainment from Kate Jones from the popular podcast 'Too Peas in a Podcast'. Kate gave a heartwarming and informative speech about her caring journey.

Seventy-nine carers attended the event. The feedback captured post event via survey was very positive. Carers stated that what they valued most about the event included – 'connecting with others', 'meeting other carers and having a laugh', 'hearing the guest speaker and meeting new people', 'being recognised for the work I do' and 'an opportunity to have a night off with other carers'.

Council continues to facilitate regular events and programs for carers. Pathways for Carers is one of these programs, with approximately 12 carers attending a monthly walking group and presentation of a guest speaker at Coonara Community House. This is a space for carers to gather, learn and connect with each other. Weekly exercise classes are provided at Knox Leisureworks, with roughly 18 people attending each week, providing carers an opportunity to connect, share stories and support each other. Regular webinars for carers and parents on topics related to access and inclusion are also provided.





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### Progressing Reconciliation and truth telling in Knox

#### **Action 1.4 Develop and implement the first Knox Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to enhance Council's capacity to build recognition and respect with First Nations community**

In 2023, Knox City Council launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that guides the work to embed reconciliation, truth telling and healing in everything we do. 'Yana djerring ba ngarrnga djerring' is a Woi-wurrung phrase translated and used with permission from Wurundjeri Council. It means 'Walk together and Listen together'. It is the vision statement in our Reconciliation and Truth telling Plan.

There are 72 actions contained in the Plan and our work to implement these actions has involved collaboration across Council Departments and various key mechanisms. The breadth of cross department collaboration can be seen in:

- The establishment of the Internal RAP Working Group in 2024 as critical in delivering these actions, with 13 teams representing all Council Departments on the Group. This Group has completed the Cultural Safety Audit Tool, attended cultural education by Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Bill and participated in yarning circles at Knox.
- Knox Council hosting a Cultural Safety and First Nations Employment Forum (2023) with the Eastern Region Group of Councils (ERG). First Nations staff and People and Culture Staff from six Eastern Region Councils met in groups to discuss progressing these mandatory actions in the Innovate RAPs.
- The Knox Council Planning and Communication Teams progressing the development of templates for signage that acknowledges Country; the wayfinding, acknowledgement and cultural interpretive signage utilising commissioned art from Wurundjeri and Bunurong artists.
- Council's Arts and Events Teams commissioning artworks, tours and educational elements in the pop-up events, festivals, citizenship ceremonies and openings at Knox Council.
- The establishment of the external Knox First Nations Leadership Group consisting of prominent Aboriginal CEOs, Elders and leaders in Knox. The Group provides feedback on policy, the Council Plan through consultation and high-level advice on the current trends and needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Council has a continued commitment to truth telling and healing through annual Sorry Day events. The successful running of the 2025 Sorry Day event marked 20 years of this commitment, recognising the ongoing impact of the Stolen Generation for First Nations people including here in Knox.
- There are now 22 Aboriginal housing properties in Knox and there is an increased presence of Aboriginal controlled and specific services in Knox.
- In 2022-2023, a short-term Project Officer was employed to explore opportunities to progress opportunities for First Nations employment and procurement.







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### **Action 3.2 Build the capacity of community organisations, families and carers to address barriers facing people with a disability**

Many families face barriers in accessing early years settings that meet their needs and the needs of their children. These barriers include accessibility, inclusivity, affordability, and responsiveness. Council plays an important role in supporting and addressing access and inclusion issues affecting children with disability or developmental delay.

Since 2018, Council have delivered disability specific professional development sessions to early years services. Council's professional development sessions aim to increase the capacity of staff, to enable successful inclusion of all children across Knox's universal early years' services. Knox delivered 5 early years professional development sessions in the 2024-25 financial year. Topics include planning impacts of trauma on development, understanding inclusion supports, understanding children with cerebral palsy and self-regulation through physical development.

In October 2024, 24 Early Years Educators attended a professional development session at the Civic Centre. It focused on practical strategies to engage children with disability in art play. Art organisation Art Friends delivered an informative and hands-on session for the early years educators. Staff had an opportunity to learn new techniques and trial strategies to engage children with disability in art play within their early years' settings.

Attendees have provided the following feedback across several sessions delivered in the first three years of the Knox CARES Strategy:

'Examples given, hands on experience. Very relevant to my role, what I learnt I can carry out with the children'

'Most useful to learn different strategies and techniques for our teaching and learning'

'More knowledge on how to support the over responsive child, unresponsive child and sensory seeking child'

and 'I'm looking forward to implementing the techniques I learned'.





## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Increasing Social Connections – ‘Keeping It REEL’

**Action 5.3 Continue to explore opportunities to strengthen the accessibility of Council and community run events, for people with reduced mobility, neurodiversity and other barriers to participation**

Social connection is a key element and focus of the Knox CARES Strategy. Older men have an increased vulnerability to being socially disconnected and have a decreased likelihood of participating in a community-based club or association. Significant life events (retirement, separation/death of a partner, moving house or a decrease in functional skills) all impact on levels of perceived and actual social connectedness. Older men are more inclined to participate in activities with a focus on a hobby or a “doing” activity rather than just socialising/talking. Social isolation and loneliness can harm a person’s physical and mental health, with links to increased pain, sleeping issues, depression/anxiety and increased harmful substance use.

The “Keeping It REEL” program was a free trial fishing program that sought to increase the social participation of older men living in Knox. The trips were a part of the Victorian Seniors Festival and took place in October 2024. The theme for the 2024 Festival was “Explore. Engage. Evolve” and encouraged older Victorians to stay connected by exploring new activities.

There were four sessions delivered, and each session was delivered at a different fishing location, all within a 45-minute drive from Knox. The transport was provided via a Council bus, and all equipment was provided, including fishing rods, bait, chair to sit on, sunscreen and a fishing license where required. Participants were collected from a pickup point, however if transport was a barrier to participation, a pickup from home was able to be organised. Lunch was provided and up to 20 places were available to participants.

The men who participated had limited or no social connections, lived alone and had existing barriers that impacted on their participation in other social programs. The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive. For some, the fishing outings were the highlight of the week and in fact, has led to self-organised future fishing outings together, upon conclusion of the program. The program received a High Commendation recognition at the Local Government Professionals Positive Ageing and Wellbeing Awards 2025.





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### Family Violence Prevention: 'Are You Safe at Home? Day' Webinar

#### Action 2.3 Partner with specialist services and organisations to deliver family violence primary prevention programs and projects in Knox, targeting priority cohorts such as men and culturally diverse communities

Knox continues to experience the highest reported rate of family violence incidents in the outer east, with the number of reported incidents growing year on year since 2018-19. In February 2024, Council was awarded funding for the three-year Free From Violence project to support family violence prevention initiatives. The program supports Victorian councils to promote positive attitudes, behaviours and culture change in their workplace and through the programs and services they deliver, to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.

On May 14th 2025, Knox partnered with Monash and Maroondah Councils to hold a webinar for Are You Safe at Home? Day. The webinar explored the rights of victim survivors of family violence and focus on how to navigate support services, including legal, housing, financial and recovery. There was a total of 159 people who engaged with the webinar through live participation and watching the recording. The recording remains publicly available.

At the end of the webinar, attendees were asked to complete an anonymous and confidential evaluation. The responses showed an increase in understanding and knowledge about family violence, as well as an increase in where to find and access support services. This is one key example of the work Knox is doing in partnership, working towards addressing family violence and supporting community.



**Know your rights**  
Navigating family violence supports

**Wednesday 14 May**  
7.30pm-9pm  
Online via Zoom

Join us for this FREE online webinar in support of Are You Safe at Home? Day, where a panel of experts will explore the rights of victim survivors of family violence and how to navigate support services, including legal, housing, financial and recovery.

Writer Jane Gilmore will moderate a panel of speakers from Eastern Community Legal Centre, FVREE (Free From Family Violence) and InTouch.

Find out more: [knox.vic.gov.au/areyousafeathomeday](http://knox.vic.gov.au/areyousafeathomeday)

Jane Gilmore  
Moderator

Scan to register

<http://bit.ly/knox-know-your-rights>

Help and support is available if you or someone you know is experiencing family violence through 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732). For more support services visit [knox.vic.gov.au/familyviolencesupport](http://knox.vic.gov.au/familyviolencesupport). If you are in immediate danger, call 000.

**FREE** FROM VIOLENCE  
**Eastern Community Legal Centre**  
**InTouch**  
**MONASH**  
**Maroondah City Council**

**knox**  
Knox City Council



## Mid-Term Review Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-27

### Successes and opportunities

The review of the Knox CARES strategy has identified a range of successes arising during the first three years of implementation, as well as opportunities to further consolidate work for the remainder of the implementation period (2025-2027).

#### Successes

- The streamlined planning approach bringing together six strategic documents into one combined strategy has simplified the approach to planning, and enhanced intersectional practice by considering the range of barriers that may impact on individuals and groups in our community.
- The review of each key focus areas has highlighted that these continue to remain areas of heightened community need and action from Council.
- Knox CARES has provided a strong basis for advocacy on social issues and reforms, allowing staff to respond in a timely way to calls for submissions on areas such as food relief, multicultural support and more.
- Utilising the Pulse reporting system has streamlined reporting and monitoring of the Strategy, providing a central point of coordination for progress updates to be compiled on an annual basis.
- Delivering several standout outcomes, such as those highlighted in the Case Studies above.

#### Opportunities

Staff identified the following opportunities for consideration in the remaining two-year implementation period for the Knox CARES Strategy:

- Foster meaningful involvement by Council Advisory Committees in Knox CARES actions, commencing with sharing the outcomes and achievements of this midterm review.
- Whilst partnerships have been a key feature of the delivery of actions to date, moving into an environment with greater resource constraints highlights the need to continue to pursue and strengthen both internal and external partnerships.
- Similarly, some actions are contingent on securing external funding. For the remainder of the plan, a focus of all responsible departments needs to be on identifying and accessing external funding to further Council's work.
- Council has endorsed the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. This plan integrates some of the key impact areas outlined in Knox CARES and takes an intersectional approach to achieving outcomes across the eight Health and Wellbeing priorities and associated actions.









## Appendix A:

# Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy Action Progress Reports – July 2022 to June 2025

### Key:

Symbol	Meaning
On schedule 	Progress against an action item is fully on track for this reporting period of July 2021 to June 2025. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods as designated.
Completed 	Progress against this action item has been completed. Reporting against this action item will not be required for future reporting periods.
Behind schedule 	Progress against this action item has partially met the scheduled timeline for this reporting period. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods.
Not Started 	This action item has not been started in the identified time due to reasons described in the progress comments. Reporting will continue for this action item for future reporting periods as designated.



### THEME 1: Knox leads and advocates for inclusion

Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>1.1 Develop and maintain a suite of accessible, plain English resources that provide an overview of community safety, health and equity issues in Knox</b>	Year 2-5	Infographic resources developed and shared with community; Number of research projects identified and conducted.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	During years 1-3, a range of resources have been developed to support the community engagement and deliberative panel process that informed the development of the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. These resources highlight the key health and wellbeing issues for the Knox community, including mental health, safety at home and risk-taking behaviours (such as alcohol harm or gambling).	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>1.2 Develop and maintain a clear advocacy position for Council in relation to key issues impacting access, equality and safety in Knox</b>	Year 1-5	Advocacy areas nominated and scoped. Number of advocacy activities undertaken and associated outcomes.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	Key advocacy activities undertaken during years 1-3 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social housing and mental health as part of Council's advocacy platform for the State Election (November 2022).</li> <li>• Presentation by Councillors of a motion to the Australian Local Government Assembly in June 2023, calling for further investment from the Commonwealth Government to address the growing need for social housing and homelessness supports.</li> <li>• Development of submissions for the following commonwealth government reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Multicultural Settlement Framework (joint submission with Eastern Region Councils, September 2023).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National Housing and Homelessness Strategy (November 2023).</li> <li>➤ Financial Wellbeing and Capability Framework Review (January 2024).</li> <li>• Submission to the State Government Parliamentary Inquiry to Food Insecurity (2024)</li> <li>• Advocated to Victoria Police and State Government for the Crime Prevention Officer to be re-instated at Knox Police Station (2025)</li> <li>• Continual participation of officers in the following to scope for future advocacy opportunities:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Monitor the recommendations and government responses to the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review.</li> <li>➤ Maintain ongoing partnership through the Safety and Health and Wellbeing Advisory committee.</li> <li>➤ Work on the development of the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>1.3 Develop an alcohol policy to outline Council's expectations for responsible service of alcohol at Council functions and in Council facilities used by</b>	Year 2-3	Policy developed, communicated to user groups and implemented.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	Completed *	<p>In December 2023, a Knox Community Alcohol Harm Profile was completed, informed by research and consultation with Council advisory committees, services and the Knox Liquor Accord.</p> <p>Community Strengthening has developed a</p>	<p>Progress against this action item has been completed.</p> <p>Reporting against this</p>



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>community groups</b>					<p>Statement of Commitment for Reducing Alcohol Harm, which was endorsed by Council at its September 2024 meeting. This statement of Commitment replaces the need for a policy to be developed and is more accessible to the community.</p> <p>As part of our commitment to advocacy, Council wrote to the Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation - the Honourable Melissa Horne MP, providing a copy of the report and our Statement of commitment for reducing alcohol harm to the Minister.</p> <p>The Knox Internal Harm Prevention Working Group was established to identify ways that Council can work effectively to prevent harm from gambling and alcohol</p>	action item will not be required for future reporting periods.
<b>1.4 Develop and implement the first Knox Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to enhance Council's capacity to build recognition and respect with First Nations community</b>	Year 1-2	Engagement with First Nations community members. RAP developed and endorsed by Council.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was endorsed at the July 2023 meeting of Council and officially launched in August 2023. First Nations Leaders, staff and Councillors attended the launch, a welcome and smoking ceremony was conducted by Uncle Colin Hunter.</p> <p>An internal RAP Working Group and external steering group was established early 2024 to share expertise and champion key priorities across Council and for the wider community.</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for a further 12 months.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>The Wurundjeri Land Council approved the use of traditional language in the RAP. The words 'Yana djerring ba ngarrnga djerring' meaning 'walking together and listening together' have been included on the front page, echoing Council's vision statement for reconciliation.</p> <p>In 2024-25, Council registered with Reconciliation Australia to develop the next RAP for Council.</p>	
<b>1.5 Profile Council's role and strengthen our contribution as a Refugee Welcome Zone, and signatory to the 'Racism, It Stops With Me' campaign</b>	Year 1-3	Awareness raising activities to promote Council's existing commitments.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>A series of videos were created and launched on Council's social media and website in the lead up to Refugee Week in June 2023. The videos shared stories of Knox residents from Poland, Iran and Myanmar who had refugee backgrounds. Community Strengthening hosted an event for more than 100 Council staff highlighting the important journeys of refugee community members and including a guest speaker from the Refugee Council of Australia.</p> <p>Council collaborated with Victoria Police and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) to facilitate community education sessions on 24 and 26 October 2023 focused on Racism. The sessions were well attended, with over 50 community members representative of Knox's culturally diverse community: Chinese, Indian, Malaysian, Persian,</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for a further 12 months.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>Zomi, Chin, Italian, and diverse European ancestries. Community members were empowered with information and resources on how to report racism to relevant authorities, including the VEOHRC reporting tool.</p> <p>Refugee Week 2024 was celebrated in July at the Knox Community Arts Centre. There were over 200 attendees and 3 women from diverse refugee and migrant backgrounds as guest speakers.</p> <p>Local key stakeholders were also present and held information stalls at the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Migrant Information Centre (refugee settlement program)</li> <li>• EACH (refugee settlement program)</li> <li>• Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre</li> <li>• The Water Well Project</li> <li>• Psylaw (supporting mental health and well-being through culturally sensitive services)</li> <li>• The Australian Iranian Society of Victoria (an organisation dedicated to promoting Iranian culture, and community engagement in Victoria)</li> </ul> <p>In 2025 two Refugee Week events were held in partnership with Your Library, guest speakers were invited with opportunities for community to participate in cultural activities.</p>	



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>1.6 Explore opportunities to strengthen communication with culturally and linguistically diverse communities through use of plain English and translated information</b>	Year 1-5	Accessible information available to community members for whom English is a second language.	Community Strengthening	On schedule ▶	<p>The Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee provided an important contribution to Council's Communications Team with the production of multilingual written information on the new waste bin service. KMAC members provided Council with insights on the most effective ways to communicate with multicultural residents that guided the development of multilingual material.</p> <p>In December 2023, climate health packs were distributed across the Knox community with advice and resources on how to stay well during heat waves. These packs were translated into 10 languages as well as easy English.</p> <p>In February 2024 two workshops were run for staff, focused on increasing knowledge and skills for developing multilingual written material and using interpreters. The workshops provided participants with skills with practical day-to-day application. Council has updated guides for staff in relation to engaging with language services to communicate with multicultural community members.</p> <p>A grant information session for groups from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds were held in July 2023 and 2024, with interpreters provided. The session encouraged groups to access Council's Minor Grants program.</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>In 2024, Council subscribed to Language Loop, an interpreting and translating service. This is available for staff who want to reach multicultural community groups through language. The services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written translations</li> <li>• Telephone interpreting (pre-booked and on-demand)</li> <li>• Onsite interpreting</li> <li>• Video interpreting</li> </ul> <p>In 2025, all staff were invited to attend an internal event for Refugee Week, to deepen staff's understanding of migrant, refugee and asylum seeker experiences. Staff also had a better understanding on how Council can make policies, programs and services more inclusive. Internal and external resources were promoted to staff to enhance their communication skills with CALD groups.</p>	
<b>1.7 Explore opportunities to improve inclusion in Council facilities through the creation of accessible bathrooms, prayer rooms, gender neutral toilets and other amenities that recognise diverse needs</b>	Year 2-5	Amenities inclusive of diverse needs are provided in a range of Council facilities.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>The new Knox Library was opened in March 2024, and features a range of amenities catering to diverse community needs, including accessible and gender-neutral toilets, a baby change facility, and customer service counters for sitting and standing.</p> <p>Capital works funding was granted for improving the accessibility of toilets in two</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.





Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>community facilities in the 2024-2025 financial year, as well as improving the amenity of HV Jones Community Room for the current tenants, Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place.</p> <p>As part of the 2024-25 Capital Works funding, scoping and design for accessible bathrooms at the two pavilions located at HV Jones were completed. Scoping works was completed at Marie Wallace Tennis Pavillion in May 2025. An all-gender accessible toilet with a baby change table has been incorporated into the floor plan for the new Bayswater Library - scheduled to open in mid-2025. The installation of an entry ramp at the Boronia Progress Hall is nearing completion.</p>	
<b>1.8 Coordinate and participate in family violence prevention and awareness raising activities</b>	Year 1-5	Activities delivered for key campaigns including 16 Days of Activism, World Elder Abuse Day, International Women's Day.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>  <b>Community Access and Support</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Key activities during Year 1 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Reel Respect project, promoting healthy relationships for young people and bystander intervention to call out inappropriate behaviours. Four 'reels' were designed and developed by young people in Knox, and screened on social media, at the Boronia Cinemas and the Knox Carols event.</li> <li>16 Days of Activism communications campaign, including a display at the Knox Community Arts Centre, roadside banners and social media posts on the theme</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>'Respect is...'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiation of the Dads Stuff program in partnership with the Early Years Team to promote positive parenting.</li> </ul> <p>Key activities during Year 2 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 Days of Activism event with Phill Cleary, November 2023, 25 attendees.</li> <li>Are You Safe at Home Day webinar - Ask, Listen, Believe with guest speaker Jess Hill, May 2024, 188 attendees.</li> <li>Affirmative consent webinar with guest speaker Chanel Contos, May 2024, 105 attendees.</li> <li>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event - 'Line up for Line Dancing', June 2024 – 115 attendees</li> </ul> <p>Key activities during Year 3 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 Days of Activism online webinar for community, focusing on the drivers and impacts of family violence and support available, December 2024, 309 people engaged through both the live webinar and watching recording</li> <li>Are You Safe At Home? Day webinar May 2025, 159 people engaging with the webinar both live and through watching the recording.</li> <li>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event,</li> </ul>	



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					involving a film screening and guest speaker to raise awareness about the forms and signs of elder abuse, June 2025, 115 attendees	
<b>1.9 Advocate with regional partners to the State Government for stronger regulation, education and intervention to address the adverse impacts of alcohol in licensed venues, public spaces and households</b>	Year 1-5	Regional partnerships developed. Engagement and advocacy with State Government.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>In December 2023, a Knox Community Alcohol Harm Profile was completed, informed by research and consultation with Council advisory committees, services and the Knox Liquor Accord. Community Strengthening has developed an Alcohol Harm Statement of Commitment and implementation plan, which went to Council for consideration in September 2024. A key priority is to develop advocacy/education information to reduce alcohol harm with regional partners that focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm prevention/education in relation to general health &amp; wellbeing, impacts on young people &amp; vulnerable population groups.</li> <li>• Engage with Liquor Control Victoria in relation regulation and monitoring of online home delivery services.</li> </ul> <p>Knox is a member of the Action on Alcohol Flagship Group. The role of the Flagship Group is to align their efforts with community health and local government to support prevention of alcohol harm in the Eastern Metro Region. The group's focus is on advocacy and education in relation to legislative reform and the health</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					impacts of alcohol harm.  Council also convenes the Knox Liquor Accord. The role of the Accord is to support licensed venues in relation to the management of patrons and responsible consumption, an opportunity for venue managers to share knowledge and network with Victoria Police.	
<b>1.10 Undertake education and advocacy activities to address the social and economic harms associated with problem gambling</b>	Year 1-5	Number of education activities delivered; Electronic Gaming Machine policy reviewed (year 2); Review membership of the Alliance for Gambling Reform.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Gamblers Help East hosted an information stall at Rowville Community Centre during Gambling Harm Awareness Week in October 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of resources about gambling harm were available in English and simple Chinese.</li> <li>• A Chinese interpreter was also available to support community conversations.</li> <li>• Gamblers Help staff were focused on supporting people who may be experiencing gambling harm and how to get back on track.</li> <li>• Over 30 community members attended the stall and provided with resources.</li> </ul> <p>In 2024 Council partnered with Westfield and a range of local stakeholders at a 'pop up' in Westfield Knox that promoted services that were available to assist those experiencing harm from gambling.</p> <p>A review of Council's Electronic Gaming Machine</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					policy including the Alliance for Gambling Reform membership has commenced, with the process including community consultation, data profile and benchmarking. The updated policy is anticipated to take a public health approach to gambling harm prevention and will be presented to Council in late 2025.	
<b>1.11 Continue to participate in regional working groups and partnerships to support Council's goals and the implementation of the Knox CARES Plan</b>	Year 1-5	Participation in working groups and networks to maintain sector knowledge and develop partnerships.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>  <b>Community Access and Support,</b>  <b>Early Years</b>	On schedule ▶	Staff have engaged in the following working groups and partnerships over the years 1 -3 of the strategy. Please note this list is not exhaustive however it is indicative of the depth and breadth of partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox Learning Alliance</li> <li>• Your Library Board (formerly Easten Region Library Board)</li> <li>• Knox Interfaith Network</li> <li>• Together for Equality and Respect (TFER)</li> <li>• Migrant Settlement Committee</li> <li>• Outer East Aboriginal Governance Group</li> <li>• Local Aboriginal Network</li> <li>• Gender Equality Eastern Region Group of Councils</li> <li>• MAV Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women Network</li> <li>• Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group.</li> <li>• Eastern Metropolitan Region Health Planners Network</li> <li>• Alcohol Flagship Group</li> <li>• Knox Liquor Accord</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcoming Cities</li> <li>Migrant Settlement Committee</li> <li>Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA)</li> <li>Knox Food Relief Taskforce</li> <li>Knox Mental Health Roundtable</li> <li>Preventing Homelessness in Women Over 55 Project steering committee</li> <li>NEPHU networks</li> </ul>	
<b>1.12 Develop a Council-wide policy and guidelines to support the use of LGBTIQ+ inclusive language and data collection across services</b>	Year 1-2	Policy developed and implemented.	<b>Community Strengthening Governance</b>	On schedule ▶	The inclusive language guide focuses on all forms of inclusive language, including LGBTIQ+, First Nations, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and older and younger people. Consultation with relevant staff and community advisory groups has been undertaken and the guide will be finalised in mid-2025.	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>1.13 Plan and implement a Council-wide training calendar to build capacity of Knox staff to address access and equity issues, support inclusion and fulfill their social justice responsibilities</b>	Year 1-5	Number of training opportunities provided and uptake amongst staff.	<b>People, Culture and Development</b>	On schedule ▶	A range of training has been run to support the organisations capacity in this space. This includes Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) training and Active Bystander Training, as well as other training related to First Nations, LGBTIQ+, cultural diversity and disability awareness. Council is committed to continual learning and growth in these areas.	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>1.14 Explore opportunities to recruit and retain a diverse workforce (employees and volunteers), through strengthening Council's</b>	Year 2-5	Review and strengthening of Council's recruitment and induction practices.	<b>People, Culture and Development</b>	On schedule ▶	In 2022-2023 People, Culture and Development have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed and implemented the "Leading the Recruitment Process" training workshop tailored to the recruitment policies and practices at Knox, which covered legal</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
own recruitment and induction practices					<p>requirements, attributes of candidates that are protected from discrimination and Unconscious Bias awareness in recruitment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched the Employer Value Proposition project to understand the factors that contribute to attraction and retention of employees at Knox, highlighting demographic diversities within each Directorate and sharing this information with Senior Management Team.</li> <li>• Progressed Gender Equality Action Plan items, with a key focus on intersectionality, in accordance with the Gender Equality Act.</li> <li>• Established a 6-month Project Officer position to explore opportunities to support First Nations employment and procurement</li> </ul> <p>In 2023-2024, People, Culture and Development have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rolled out Council's Organisational Development Plan, focusing on driving talent development, cultural uplift and the strengthening learning initiatives, which are the key drivers to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.</li> <li>• Rolled out recruitment training to all people leaders focussing on tools and processes such as an inclusive culture statement, diversity training, leadership development training and an annual recognition program</li> </ul>	



Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Held a First Nations Employment and Cultural Safety Forum in November 2023, in partnership with the Eastern Regional Group of Councils</li> <li>Identified improvements in how recruitment activity is reported, including the diversity of applicants attracted per Directorate and demographics of candidates appointed into leadership roles</li> </ul> <p>In 2024-2025, People, Culture and Development have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed its recruitment training to align with the Recruiting for Excellence policy, improve candidate experience, and ensure fair, transparent, and equitable practices.</li> <li>Started to develop the new Gender Equality Action Plan</li> <li>Updated the candidate application process to collect anonymous demographic and diversity data, supporting diversity reporting.</li> <li>Progressed the Knox Employee Value Proposition project with key initiatives to support the attraction and retention of employees at Knox. The initiatives include launching the “Why Knox” bus tour to support employee connection, launch of Knox’s first careers video, showing the diverse employees and roles, and staff LinkedIn profiles to recognise individuals</li> </ul>	





Action	Year/s	What are our outputs?	Responsible Department	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					within the organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered one Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training in March 2025, with another scheduled for August 2025</li> </ul>	
<b>1.15 Develop a strategic communications plan to coordinate key messages in relation to promoting the inclusion of diverse groups and addressing complex social issues</b>	Years 1-2	Strategic communications plan. Key messaging aligns with Knox CARES	<b>Communications, Community Strengthening</b>  <b>Community Access and Support</b>	On schedule ▶	A strategic communications plan has been developed to build visibility of key messages and principles of Knox CARES. Key activities identified include key messages and wordmark; growing our photo bank of inclusive and representative imagery; and an annual planning process involving a calendar linking key days of significance with Knox CARES initiatives across a range of internal and external channels.	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



## THEME 2: Knox promotes safety in the community

What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>2.1 Implement the Empowering Communities program and deliver projects co-designed with Knox community members to address the causes and drivers of crime</b>	Year 1-3	Facilitation of the Empowering Communities Action Group; Development and implementation of an action plan; Number of projects co-designed with the community.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	Completed *	<p>The Knox Empowering Communities program provided funding to support our local community to design and lead projects that address the causes of crime and improve perceptions of safety in Ferntree Gully. The program was funded by the State Government Building Safer Communities program. 6 community led projects were approved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Foothills Community Care Community Safety Outreach Project</li> <li>2. Mountain District Learning Centre - Youth Empowerment for Success</li> <li>3. Rotary Club Ferntree Gully- Knox Nocturnals Youth Groups</li> <li>4. Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place - Cultural Connections</li> <li>5. Neighbour Day – Empowering Communities Action Group.</li> <li>6. Coonara Community House – Ferntree Gully Market</li> </ol> <p>Projects were completed by September 2024 with an evaluation report submitted to the Department of Justice.</p>	This action concluded in September 2024 at the end of the Building Safer Communities funding.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>A key highlight was Neighbour Day in March 2024, with over 1000 residents taking part in 57 street events over three weekends. The objective was to bring together neighbours, to create belonging and grow an inclusive community. Each host was provided with food and activities, and initial feedback indicates everyone had a great time and will continue to build closer relationships with each other.</p> <p>In May 2024, Coonara Community House commenced a Ferntree Gully Market at the local shopping precinct, to bring together local community, traders and community groups with over 1400 people attending the first market.</p> <p>Koorie Academy and Mullum Mullum partnered with Knox to deliver a basketball tournament and cultural education sessions at the Rowville Community Centre - inviting young people of all ages including the Knox Nocturnal participants.</p>	
<b>2.2 Develop and provide family violence help messages and displays of information at Council facilities and other community spaces to encourage victim-survivors and</b>	Year 1-5	Resources developed and displayed in various settings.	<b>Community Strengthening</b> Communications	Completed *	<p>A range of resources continue to be updated and distributed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men's behaviour change posters promoting early intervention and connection to support services for men.</li> <li>Family violence awareness posters (updated in 2022-23 to include details for both First Nations and culturally inclusive</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
perpetrators to seek support					<p>support services).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family violence help cards have been reprinted twice per year on demand from community facilities, libraries and schools.</li> <li>Officers continue to regularly review information on Council's website regarding family violence support services.</li> </ul> <p>In 2024-25, a reprint of 900 updated family violence cards for distribution at Council facilities and events.</p>	
<b>2.3 Partner with specialist services and organisations to deliver family violence primary prevention programs and projects in Knox, targeting priority cohorts such as men and culturally diverse communities</b>	Year 1-5	Development and implementation of a family violence work plan identifying target cohorts, activities and prospective partners.	<b>Community Strengthening</b> Community Access and Support	On schedule ▶	<p>The priority cohort targeted in 2022-23 were young people, through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reel Respect project</li> <li>FVREE Young Leaders program.</li> </ul> <p>Work commenced to engage men as a priority cohort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs such as Dad's Stuff promoted positive parenting and the role of fathers.</li> <li>Dad's Stuff participants requested further information around men's mental health.</li> <li>This was delivered through a workshop with Relationships Victoria in October 2023.</li> </ul> <p>Throughout 2023-24, priority cohorts continued</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>to be a key focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A workshop was delivered in partnership with the Centre for Holistic Health for early years educators, focusing on cultural understanding of family violence in the Chinese community.</li> <li>• A webinar targeting parents of teenagers was delivered in partnership with Eastern Community Legal Service, to promote greater understanding of affirmative consent laws.</li> <li>• In February 2024, Council was awarded funding for the three-year Free From Violence project to support family violence prevention initiatives.</li> <li>• Opportunities have been identified to partner with neighbouring municipalities who received the funding in 2022, commencing with the Are You Safe At Home? Day webinar in May 2024 in partnership with Monash and Maroondah Councils and focused on understanding coercive control.</li> </ul> <p>In 2024-2025, the following events were delivered in partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 Days of Activism online webinar for community in partnership with Monash and Maroondah Councils in December 2024</li> </ul> <p>Are You Safe At Home? Day webinar in partnership with Monash and Maroondah Councils, FVREE – Free From Family Violence,</p>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>Eastern Community Legal Centre and inTouch in May 2025</p> <p>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event in partnership with Eastern Community Legal Centre in June 2025</p> <p>Networking meetings were also held in both 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 with the local family violence prevention and response sector. The priorities of this were to information share and build relationships to council and among groups. The following organisations were in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mackillop Family Services</li> <li>• FVREE</li> <li>• Underneath My Umbrella</li> <li>• Bright Church</li> <li>• Community Legal Centre</li> <li>• Eastern Community Legal Centre</li> <li>• Department of Education (Respectful Relationships)</li> <li>• Migrant Information Centre</li> <li>• Coonara Community House</li> </ul>	
<b>2.4 Lead collaborative partnerships across Council to promote a 'whole of business' approach promoting safer public places, including the use of safer</b>	Year 1-5	Development of safer design principles resource. Number of enquiries received and responded to;	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Council's Visual Surveillance Committee responds to and assesses CCTV inquiries from the community and applications by groups in Council-owned properties. Safer design principles are included in master plan concept designs.</p> <p>Creating safer public places is a high priority for</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
design principles and the urban design framework, as well as responding to CCTV enquiries.		Policy maintained and reviewed as required.			<p>community and Council. Council's Safer Communities Officer partners with Police and key Council teams to address community safety issues with a focus on safer design. Council Officers adopt a place-based approach to crime prevention and have provided advice and conducted community safety assessments at various locations with police and local residents. Council responds to community concerns reported, undertakes site visits and develops actions to address concerns. Advice is provided for home security, reporting crime and safer design principles.</p> <p>A key site of community concern was the Ferntree Gully Quarry, with residents raising concern about public drinking and anti-social behaviour, particularly during the summer months. During November/December 2023, Council and Police conducted on site meetings with community to better understand the issues and delivered crime prevention initiatives such as the installation of 'no public drinking' signage, increased police and community laws presence, and distribution of information and contact numbers to report issues to over 200 nearby households.</p> <p>Another site where concerns were raised was at</p>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>Fairpark Reserve in the second half of 2024. Council worked with police and local residents to raise community awareness and encourage reporting, and other community safety interventions which resulted in the reduction in reported concerns.</p> <p>Council's Visual Surveillance Committee continues to provide advice and direction to community groups in reaction to the installation of CCTV systems on Council facilities.</p>	
<b>2.5 Implement values-based messaging campaigns to raise awareness of alcohol and drug related harms and promote good decision making</b>	Year 1-5	Number of campaigns delivered and their reach.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>During the summer holidays each year Council develops community messages about responsible drinking of alcohol and staying healthy, which are distributed via social media.</p> <p>A communications plan was developed to progress the review of Council's Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and the delivery of a Statement of Commitment for Reducing Alcohol Harm (endorsed late 2024). During mental health month in October 2024, the campaigns addressed gambling and alcohol harm.</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>2.6 Reduce and respond to alcohol related harms in partnership with key stakeholders including community groups,</b>	Year 1-5	Participation in the flagship alcohol group; Leadership of the Knox Liquor	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	Annually, Council provides information sessions for sporting clubs about reducing alcohol and drug related harm delivered by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation. Council also partners with Victoria Police to address issues of public	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the





What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>sporting clubs and Victoria Police</b>		Accord. Consider recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Men's Risky Drinking project (delivered in 2021/22).			<p>drinking and harm in the community through discussion with the Knox Liquor Accord, attending local Trader Group meetings and meeting with individual groups and clubs as required.</p> <p>Ongoing work continues with Leisure Services Team to engage and support sporting clubs to prevent alcohol related harm with Safer Communities Officers attending Club Development sessions and other activities as required.</p> <p>Partnership between Community Strengthening and the Leisure Team continues to go strongly, and community education activities based on values-based messaging and resources have been delivered to sporting clubs. Conversations are currently being had around developing a healthy sports club program. Education activities have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on alcohol consumption (2022, "Raise the Bar")</li> <li>• Workshop about best practice around alcohol (2024, 19 clubs participated)</li> <li>• Workshop about drug and alcohol abuse (2025, 7 clubs participated).</li> </ul>	term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>2.7 Encourage and support bystander action to challenge racism and discrimination when it occurs, and promote use of the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's reporting tool</b>	Year 2-5	Promotion of the VHREOC reporting tool. Anti-racism campaign delivered and reach.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Active Bystander Training was delivered for staff and community in 2023. The objective of the training was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase confidence in recognising behaviour.</li> <li>• Build confidence with skills to intervene</li> <li>• Build reflective skills to understand personal biases and emotional responses.</li> </ul> <p>Staff from Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place attended the community training and found it valuable to build confidence to change the conversation with people.</p> <p>Active Bystander Training was delivered to staff in May 2025. The objectives of this training were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build participants' ability to identify harmful and dominating language, including microaggressions, jokes, and harmful stereotypes that support different forms of oppression</li> <li>• Build reflective skills to acknowledge their own bias, blind spots and emotional responses</li> <li>• Equip participants with a basic conversation-based skill set to intervene as a bystander in safe and effective ways</li> <li>• Build participant's confidence to create change as bystanders in their communities</li> </ul> <p>Council collaborated with Victoria Police and the</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) to facilitate community education sessions on 24 and 26 October 2023 focused on Racism. The sessions were well attended, with over 50 community members representative of Knox's culturally diverse community: Chinese, Indian, Malaysian, Persian, Zomi, Chin, Italian, and diverse European ancestries. Community members were empowered with information and resources on how to report racism to relevant authorities, including the VEOHRC reporting tool.</p> <p>VHREOC is promoted through advisory committees.</p> <p>In May 2025, VHREOC delivered a session for staff on their Community Reporting Tool. This session was an opportunity to learn more about the tool and its potential to support Knox's community's engagement with human rights issues. The session also discussed the various discrimination laws and acts related to discrimination. 15 staff members attended.</p>	
<b>2.8 Deliver community engagement and capacity building activities to increase community awareness and understanding of the</b>	Year 1-5	Number of activities delivered. Number of resources developed and	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>A range of community engagement activities have been delivered in the first 3 years of the strategy to build community capacity to understand and respond to family violence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Making A Splash' World Elder Abuse Awareness Day June 2023. Approximately 60</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women, children and older people.</b>		distributed.			<p>people attended the event which included an information session followed by aqua aerobics session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise, Respond, Refer training for community groups, November 2023, 26 attendees.</li> <li>• Let's Talk About workshop for young adults at Swinburne Wantirna, April 2024, 8 attendees</li> <li>• Clubs Say No To Family Violence workshop, May 2024, 25 attendees.</li> <li>• Are You Safe at Home Day webinar - Ask, Listen, Believe with guest speaker Jess Hill, May 2024, 188 attendees</li> <li>• Line Up For Line Dancing, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day June 2024, 100 attendees featuring a guest speaker and information stalls.</li> <li>• 16 Days of Activism online webinar for community, focusing on the drivers and impacts of family violence and support available, December 2024, 309 people engaged through both the live webinar and watching recording</li> <li>• Are You Safe At Home? Day webinar May 2025, 159 people engaging with the webinar both live and through watching the recording.</li> <li>• Screening of the movie Thelma, along with a guest speaker to raise awareness about the forms and signs of elder abuse, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2025 115 attendees</li> </ul>	of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>The Leisure Team continue to support clubs in making sporting environments gender equal, with a change to Council's Reserve Allocations Policy introduced.</p> <p>From 2025, clubs will need to have a female team to be eligible for use of a Council facility/ground. The Leisure Team are rolling out engagement and capacity building activities for clubs to support them in making this change.</p>	



### THEME 3: Knox supports people in need

What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>3.1 Identify, develop and lead strategic committees or forums that enhance service coordination and collaboration</b>	Year 1-5	<p>Leadership of the Mental Health Roundtable.</p> <p>Establishment of the Emergency Food Relief Taskforce.</p>	<p><b>Community Wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Community Access and Support</b></p>	Completed *	<p>Key committees and forums have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knox Mental Health Roundtable – was a commitment to building connections, strengthening partnerships, identifying collective approaches and sharing knowledge and expertise. Men’s mental health was identified as a priority. Men experience barriers to accessing mental health services, gaining diagnoses, and are more likely than women to discontinue services that they do access. A forum titled ‘When life throws you a curve ball’ was held on 16 May with 50 community leaders attending to discuss this issue. The Knox Mental Health Roundtable group was concluded in 2024, with the priorities being incorporated into the focus of the Knox Community Safety Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• The Knox Food Relief Taskforce was established in January 2023 and has progressed significant collective work around meeting the growing demand for food relief in Knox. Key achievements have included the establishment of a pilot food distribution hub with Outer East Foodshare, the development of a collective advocacy plan and delivery of training addressing the needs of the</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>volunteers working on the group to deliver support to community. A collective survey was also undertaken with service users in August 2023, providing valuable insight into the level of reliance on food relief support in Knox. This critical information will support future advocacy efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A workshop was held in April 2024 and June 2025 for all of Council's advisory committees as part of the community engagement process driving the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan.</li> <li>• A family violence networking event was held in May 2024, with 15 representatives from a range of local services to discuss opportunities for improved partnerships as Council embarks on the Free From Violence program.</li> <li>• A forum was held in June 2024 for Community Housing Organisations, to build relationships with Council, and develop an understanding of the preferred models of working together to develop social and affordable housing.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.2 Build the capacity of community organisations, families and carers to address barriers facing people with a disability</b>	Year 1-5	Number of training sessions delivered; Number of participants.	<b>Community Access and Support</b>	On schedule ▶	The Disability Inclusion Team offered 17 early years professional development sessions in 2022/23, 11 in 2023/24, and 5 in 2024/24, increasing the skills and confidence of early years workers when working with children with a disability. Sessions range from 22 - 124 attendees. Events for parents and carers were also offered and attendance ranged from 30 to 80 people at	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>each session. Topics that were covered in professional development sessions as well as events for parents and carers included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• webinars, workshops and an expo including neurodivergence and social skills</li> <li>• educational transitions</li> <li>• school refusal</li> <li>• carer boundaries</li> <li>• practical strategies for raising your autistic child</li> <li>• impacts of trauma on development</li> <li>• understanding inclusion supports</li> <li>• understanding children with cerebral palsy</li> <li>• self-regulation through physical development.</li> </ul> <p>Over the three years of the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly carer exercise classes, monthly carer walking groups and the borderline personality disorder carers group provided Knox carers with social connection and further information to support their caring role.</li> <li>• The Knox Disability Inclusion Team coordinated the Knox Disability Partnership Network to build the capacity of service providers and enable partnerships to address barriers.</li> <li>• The team developed and updated Access Key accessibility guides for local Council venues</li> </ul>	





What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>and events as required to support access and provide information to address barriers faced by people with a disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community have been supported to understand and access the NDIA and community services.</li> <li>• Accessing Knox e-newsletter has been distributed regularly providing community with disability related information about events and services in Knox.</li> <li>• Library has introduced ReaderPens as a loan item, allowing people with a disability to trial this technology. The pen allows the user to scan text and have audio read out.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.3 Continue to provide community grants to fund community-led initiatives that respond to local needs and provide support to vulnerable people</b>	Year 1-5	Number and value of grants awarded through the Community Development Fund and Minor Grants programs.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>In July 2022, a new four-year Community Partnership Fund round commenced, including streams for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare relief (Knox Infolink) financial counselling (EACH).</li> <li>• Legal advice (ECLC).</li> <li>• Generalist counselling (EACH).</li> </ul> <p>Funds are also provided to each of the five community houses who provide important social connection and outreach programs.</p> <p>A temporary food relief stream was added to the Minor Grants program from November 2022 to June 2023, which provided 13 local agencies with a total of \$52,073 to provide food</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>relief programs.</p> <p>The 2023/24 Community Development Fund provided almost \$380,000 to 49 community-led projects including several focused on supporting vulnerable people.</p> <p>Highlights included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four food relief programs</li> <li>• Five projects providing inclusive programs for people with disability,</li> <li>• Two family violence support projects</li> <li>• Three projects addressing mental health.</li> <li>• A range of projects were funded supporting vulnerable cohorts such as young people, seniors and residents living in public and social housing.</li> </ul> <p>In 2024/25 Community Development Fund program funded 37 grants and the Minor Grants program funded 72 grants.</p> <p>Highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six food relief/food security programs</li> <li>• Five projects providing inclusive programs for people with disability</li> <li>• Two family violence support projects</li> <li>• Two projects addressing mental health</li> <li>• A range of projects supporting vulnerable cohorts such as young people, seniors and people from a multicultural background.</li> </ul>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					A review of the Grants program was presented to Council for endorsement at its May 2025 meeting. Changes included an increase from 4 to 7 categories under the Community Development Fund and a new funding stream, called Emergency Relief Fund, addressing short term, essential support needs for Knox residents. The 3 year funding cap of \$5,000 for Minor Grants was also removed to make the program more accessible for the community.	
<b>3.4 Develop and maintain resources that target priority groups and raise awareness of services and supports available in Knox</b>	Year 1-5	Print and electronic resources developed and distributed. Council's website maintained with information on support services.	<b>Community Strengthening</b> Communications	Completed *	<p>Family Violence and Mental Health resource cards have continued to be in high demand and are updated and reprinted at least twice per year.</p> <p>These cards are distributed at Council facilities, libraries, churches, schools, and community houses. Council's website continues to be updated as needed, as a central source of information for vulnerable cohorts.</p> <p>The Community Strengthening eNewsletter has been published monthly, with information to support community members in becoming involved in their community and building capacity.</p> <p>An updated brochure on food relief services was developed and launched in June 2024, in partnership with the Knox Emergency Relief Network.</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					Resources are regularly updated and printed as required in response to community need.	
<b>3.5 Continue to monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and growing cost of living pressures for Knox residents, and consider how Council can respond</b>	Year 1-3	Convene internal COVID-19 Pandemic recovery working group. Monitor available information on impacts for the Knox community. Incorporate response during business planning processes and/or provide recommendations to Council as relevant.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	Completed *	<p>The Knox Food Relief Taskforce was established in January 2023 and provides an avenue for officers to monitor the impact of cost-of-living pressures in real time.</p> <p>Through this group it has been noted that in 2023 there was a 40% increase in demand for food relief in Knox.</p> <p>In August 2023, Community Strengthening partnered with food relief providers and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to conduct a survey of people accessing food relief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>44% of respondents have started accessing food relief in the past year. 69% reported regularly running out of money to buy food, and 23% had gone without food for a day or longer in the past 12 months. Most concerning, 56% of respondents expected that they would need food relief indefinitely.</li> </ul> <p>In December 2023, Council supported Foodbank Victoria to deliver a Christmas Market in the carpark of the Knox Civic Centre, with more than 400 people attending to access fresh produce and non-perishable Christmas items.</p>	Given that this action is related to the COVID-19 Pandemic it is deemed complete



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>An audit of food relief supply revealed that more than 1800 meals and 1500 hampers or pantry visits are distributed every week in Knox.</p> <p>Engagement with Community Partnership Funded agencies also indicates growing demand for related services such as financial counselling (including an increasing number of mortgage holders), legal advice and family violence counselling.</p> <p>Monitoring of housing affordability continues to show a decline in affordable sales and rentals in Knox, as noted in the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan, adopted by Council in April 2023. The Short Term Support team have noted an increase in reports of rough sleeping, as well as enquiries for other supports.</p>	
<b>3.6 Continue to deliver short-term support services to help connect vulnerable residents with the services and supports they require.</b>	Year 1-5	Number of intake calls received and assessed; Number of clients supported.	<b>Community Access and Support</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>In 2022-23, the Short Term Support (STS) Team responded to 348 community referrals, in 2023/24 STS responded to 355 referrals, in 2024/25 STS responded to 372 referrals.</p> <p>Referrals are received via varying internal and external stakeholders such as KCC customer service, KCC Meals on Wheels Program, Knox Infolink, Department of Families Fairness and Housing and Victoria Police. The STS Team assisted vulnerable community members experiencing issues such as hoarding and</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>squalor, complex family dynamics, navigating disability, mental health and aged care systems, elder abuse and neglect, and financial hardship.</p> <p>The STS Team collaborate with many community organisations including EACH, CityLife and The Salvation Army to link clients into longer term supports and assistance.</p> <p>Rough sleeping notifications continue to increase significantly. In 2022-23, a total of 68 rough sleeping notifications were triaged by the STS Team, compared to 129 in 2023-24 and 145 in 2024-25. In addition, housing assistance was offered to 94 people in 2022-23, 335 people in 2023-24 and 370 people in 2024-25.</p>	
<b>3.7 Implement the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2022-27</b>	Year 1-5	Number of actions implemented in the action plan and associated projects delivered.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>The Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy was adopted by Council in April 2023.</p> <p>Key progress to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A site to sell for social and affordable housing was considered by Council in 2024 however Councillors resolved not to proceed.</li> <li>• Initiation of regular meetings with Homes Victoria.</li> <li>• Advocacy regarding the need for social housing in Knox,</li> <li>• A submission was prepared for the National Housing and Homelessness</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>Strategy review in November 2023.</p> <p>Knox Council continues to lead the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance, and auspiced the Alliance's research project on Preventing Homelessness for Older Women which was completed in November 2023.</p> <p>Knox also continues to participate in the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group., with key projects this year including the development of a values-based messaging campaign to raise awareness of housing shortfall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff across council departments have been involved in the Wantirna Activation Group - a group run by Community Housing Limited, with the purpose of supporting the residents in the new community housing building across the road from the Civic Centre.</li> </ul>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>4.1 Develop a business case to support the establishment of a First Nations community hub (gathering place).</b>	Year 1-2	Establishment of a business case to use in seeking funding; Identification of possible sites within Knox.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place were successful in a competitive expression of interest process to secure use of a Council facility at H.V. Jones Reserve in Ferntree Gully from early 2023 to use as a small hub for First Nations services and support in Knox.</li> <li>The development of a larger and more permanent hub is included in the Reconciliation Action Plan and is dependent on State Government funding.</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>4.2 Actively support and recognise the importance of truth telling processes as a step towards healing and unity with First Nations people</b>	Year 2-5	Delivery of an annual event marking Sorry Day; Recognition of the Yoo-rook Justice Commission findings; Identify sites of significance in First Nations history.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions related to this initiative are included in the RAP. First Nations community yarning circles were held in September and October 2023 to support community healing during and following the Referendum results.</li> <li>Discussion has commenced across Council in relation to colonial settlement sites and markers in Knox and exploring the process for developing options to respond to Council. Council now has access to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System, a website that gives information and data about registered artefacts in Victoria.</li> <li>Sorry Day event held in May 2025, 200 community members and council staff participated in the event, which was Councils</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.





What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					20 <sup>th</sup> year of formally recognising 'Sorry Day'	
<b>4.3 Build leadership and advocacy skills amongst current and emerging leaders in First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse communities</b>	Year 1-5	Facilitate Reconciliation Action Plan committee and Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee; Develop opportunities for leaders to participate in civic and community activities.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Staff from Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place have participated in Council's community training programs, including bystander training and grant writing workshops.</p> <p>Council has provided opportunities for First Nations community and young leaders to lead and perform and showcase skills at Knox Festival and during Cultural Diversity Week.</p> <p>In January and March 2024, Council's First Nations Lead partnered with the Koori Basketball Academy to provide opportunities for young leaders to coach and deliver cultural education sessions.</p> <p>A pilot program, 'Building Your Community Group' was delivered in late 2023 for leaders from culturally diverse community groups. A series of five workshops were co-designed with community leaders, and facilitated in partnership between Council, the Migrant Information Centre and Rowville Community Learning Centre. Topics included governance, budgeting, event planning and grant writing.</p> <p>In 2024-25, 3 Koori Academy training sessions held in Q3 in Knox, with 250-300 Aboriginal community</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					in attendance. Young Aboriginal players, coaches and cultural educators lead these clinics, with support of the Elders.	
<b>4.4 Work with leaders from First Nations and culturally diverse communities to strengthen cultural awareness amongst the broader Knox community</b>	Year 1-5	Annual recognition of events including Reconciliation Week, Refugee Week and Cultural Diversity Week.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>As part of the Move Your Way program in 2023, 2024 and 2025, Council promoted cultural awareness amongst Knox community members by delivering First Nations cultural walks in Ferntree Gully. Cultural awareness activities have also been embedded into Citizenship Ceremonies in Knox, providing an opportunity to introduce new Australian citizens to history and culture.</p> <p>In March 2024, Council hosted a free, one-day event to celebrate the important contributions many multicultural communities from refugee and migrant backgrounds bring to Knox for Cultural Diversity Week. Held at Carrington Park Leisure Centre, over 400 community members enjoyed an afternoon of music, performances, food, activities, and First Nations crafts.</p> <p>Through the Community Training calendar, Council has engaged the Migrant Information Centre to deliver two Cultural Sensitivity training workshops (total 33 participants). In addition, the Koorie Heritage Trust has been engaged to deliver three sessions on Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency (total 62 participants). These sessions</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>have encouraged local community groups to be more inclusive, culturally safe spaces for people of diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>In April 2025, Knox delivered a free Knox community event to celebrate Cultural Diversity Week at The Basin Community House. A range of activities were delivered including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicultural Workshops</li> <li>• First Nations Cultural Education</li> <li>• Cultural Crafts &amp; Arts</li> <li>• Storytime</li> <li>• Cooking Classes</li> <li>• Recreational activities</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between 2024-2025 First Nations cultural awareness was also strengthened through: One Wurundjeri cultural education session held for Knox Council staff, with approximately 20 staff attending.</li> <li>• Three cultural walks held for community, including as part of Move Your Way and Knox Fest, with approximately 30 community members attending.</li> <li>• Worked in collaboration with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and families to secure funding to develop public artwork to celebrate the works of Aunty Dot.</li> <li>• Worked with City Futures, Environment Team</li> </ul>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>to engage Indigenous knowledge in response to climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked with Major Projects to establish the Woi-wurrong name for the wetlands and start plan for launch.</li> </ul>	
<b>4.5 Apply a life stage approach to addressing the needs of LGBTIQ+ people, including for example, providing individual support and group programs for LGBTIQ+ young people and their families</b>	Year 1-5	Number of programs/events delivered; Number of young people and families participating.	<b>Community Access and Support</b>  <b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	During the strategy Youth Services delivered 5 group programs for LGBTIQ+ young people. Collectively these groups support over 60 young people every month. Two of these groups are delivered by peer youth volunteers. In addition to these group programs LGBTIQ+ young people have been supported to attend several additional social connection activities including Pride March, Rainbow BBQ and celebrating diversity school holiday activities.	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>4.6 Partner with the LGBTIQ+ community to deliver initiatives and events that support LGBTIQ+ days of recognition, and address discrimination and harassment</b>	Year 1-5	Annual participation in the Pride March Annual recognition event for the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and	<b>Community Strengthening</b>  Community Access and Support	On schedule ▶	<p>In the 2022-23 financial year, Council participated in the Pride March and delivered a community event for IDAHOBIT day. This was followed by Intersectional Bystander Training to help our community learn practical skills to call out LGBTIQ+ discrimination.</p> <p>In 2023-24, the LGBTIQ+ working group again coordinated participation in the annual Pride March (4 February 2024) and deliver an internal IDAHOBIT day recognition event (17 May 2024).</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.




What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
		Transphobia (IDAHOBIT).			<p>2024 events include an author talk at Knox Library (15 attendees) and a themed exercise class at Leisureworks (8 attendees).</p> <p>Pride packs were developed, including "You Are Welcome Here" decal, brochures on inclusion and information on managing resistance and backlash. The packs (total of 100) were distributed to local community organisations, including Your Library, community houses and sporting clubs.</p> <p>IDAHOBIT - 17 May 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community event: Author talk with Sam Elkin with 15 attendees.</li> <li>Community event: LGBTIQ+ Exercise class at Leisureworks with 8 attendees</li> <li>82% of participants who completed the evaluation survey (total from both the above events) either strongly agreed or agreed to "By attending this event, I felt seen and included" and 88% either strongly agreed or agreed to "By attending this event I feel more connected to others". Participants would like to see more events and supports for everyone (not just under 25).</li> <li>Staff event with approximately 60-70 attendees with 70% of attendees who completed the evaluation survey having either 'extremely aware' or 'aware' of LGBTIQ+ discrimination</li> </ul>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>and 73% gained knowledge or somewhat knowledge about LGBTIQ+ community after the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear it Purple Day - Friday 30 August 2024 - staff conversations around inclusion and allyship and staff donated gold coins which was donated to Wear it Purple Day.</li> </ul> <p>Midsumma Pride March - 2 February 2025 - 42 young people registered to attend however due to the extreme hot weather on the day only 16 young people attended, Knox staff members attended to support the young people.</p> <p>IDAHOBIT 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal staff event with guest speaker and morning tea, 120 staff attended, received 45 survey responded</li> <li>87% of respondents answered yes to the question "have you gained knowledge on how to be an active ally for the LGBTIQ+ community as a result of this event?"</li> <li>82% of respondents answered yes to the question "have you gained knowledge about the LGBTIQ+ community at today's event?"</li> </ul> <p>'Wellness Wednesday' stall set up at Knox Leisureworks with information about supporting LGBTIQ+ communities. Staff</p>	



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					interacted with 20 community members	
<b>4.7 Support the delivery of arts and cultural activities led by diverse groups including women, LGBTIQ+, culturally and linguistically diverse, people with a disability and First Nations.</b> 	Year 1-5	Engagement with diverse artists and groups to produce workshops, events, public art and other activities.	<b>Active and Creative Communities</b>  Community Strengthening	On schedule ▶	Diverse groups have been involved in the delivery of arts and cultural activities over the past 3 years. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations artists involved as part of the Ferntree Gully Creative Placemaking Project (Amina Briggs and Grace Brown); and Charlotte Allingham, Jesse Wright and Molly Hunt engaged as Light Box Gallery Artists for Immerse 2024.</li> <li>• Indigenous Outreach Project, Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country at the Knox Fest 2023, 2024 and 2025</li> <li>• Kamara Morgan, First Nations artist as part of the Knox Library development</li> <li>• LGBTIQ+ artists, J Rosenbaum and Jonathan Homesy, engaged in Immerse 2024, as well as David Lee Perira in the Ferntree Gully Creative Placemaking Project</li> <li>• Youth Services LGBTIQ+ action group undertook a creative project with KCAC</li> <li>• Representation from ten local CALD groups for Cultural Diversity Week Event March 2024</li> <li>• Djembe Movement Australia, Urban Belly Dance Group and Mystique Belly Dancers performed at the Knox Fest 2024</li> <li>• Various culturally diverse groups performance</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>at the Knox Community Arts Centre, including Melbourne Indian Theatre Group, Khelaia Production Music Group, Michelle Lu Music Group, Super Mande Percussion Group, Vedanta Centre Music Group, Aaj Jaane Ki Zid Ka Kara Music Group, Geentanjail Australia Music Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for people with a disability including artist Caden Beattle engaged in Artslink, as well as activities at the Knox</li> <li>• Community Arts Centre including Vision Australia Community Group, and Kathy Kermanidis All Abilities Drumming Circle.</li> <li>• Immerse 2024 and Knox Festival 2024 and 2025 and supported a number of people and community from these cohorts through programming and offering opportunities for participation.</li> <li>• Sorry Day Ceremonies involving speakers, performers and a smoking ceremony in 2023, 2024, 2025</li> <li>• In March 2025, developed First Nations Arts trail allowing Knox residents to do a self guided tour of First Nations art in Knox</li> <li>• In 2025, received a grant for major public art piece honoring Aunty Dot Peters</li> <li>• In April 2025, Knox delivered a free Knox community event to celebrate Cultural Diversity Week at The Basin Community</li> </ul>	





What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>House. A range of activities were delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In November 2024 the event “Rainbow Euphoria” was held at the Knox Community Arts Centre. Event was a night of community, confidence and joy for LGBTQIA+ young people with performances and art by local LGBTQIA+ artists.</li> <li>Recreational group through Vision Australia and all abilities drumming circle meet at Knox Community Arts Centre on a weekly basis.</li> </ul>	
<b>4.8 Build community capacity to understand and support gender equality in community groups, sporting clubs, cultural venues and other settings</b>	Year 1-5	Number of female participation initiatives delivered with sporting clubs through the club development program; Implementation of Gender Impact Assessments	<b>Community Strengthening, Active and Creative Communities</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Work continues to build the capacity of sporting clubs to promote gender equality through the Female Sport Participation Action Plan.</p> <p>In partnership with Monash City Council, Knox Council screened the film, Equal the Contest in 2024, to celebrate International Women’s Day. The film is a story of a filmmaker joining a new local women’s footy club in Regional Victoria. The objectives were to profile the achievements of women and gender diverse people, increase community awareness of gender equality and the drivers of family violence, and challenge attitudes that are associated with gender inequality. 47 people attended the event and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 people completed the post-event survey, rating the event 4.7 out of 5</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
		.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>key messages taken away including "Barriers are not always obvious" and "Men have a role to perform to give women opportunity for sport."</li> </ul> <p>The following training has been delivered in 2024-25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Allies of Change' at Ferntree Gully Cricket Club on with 30 people in attendance.</li> <li>'Beyond the Manbox' Healthy Masculinities training at Knox Football Netball Club with 19 in attendance).</li> </ul>	
<b>4.9 Identify opportunities to improve the diversity of people and families represented in Council's print and electronic communications to represent the Knox community</b>	Year 1-5	A growing photo library with people of all ages, abilities and identities; Diversity represented in Council documents, promotional materials, social media and website.	<b>Communications</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Professional photography is commissioned 6 times a year for Knox News and is reused across all communications channels. Editorial planning for Knox News intentionally features the perspectives of people who benefit from our services and reflect the diversity of the Knox community.</p> <p>Photographers are also routinely engaged for community-facing Council events including Knox Festival, Cultural Diversity Week, Seniors Festival, Sorry Day and others. These events provide an opportunity to capture a broad cross-section of community demographics and build a diverse photo library for future communications and publications.</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>4.10 Partner with community to</b>	Year 1-5	Annual recognition	<b>Community Access and</b>	On schedule	The Disability Inclusion Team worked with Knox Neighbourhood Houses in both 2022 and 2023 to	This action will continue



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<p><b>deliver recognition events for people with a disability and their carers, to share stories and shape community attitudes</b></p>		<p>events for International Day of People with a Disability, and National Carers Week.</p>	<p><b>Support</b></p>	<p>►</p>	<p>offer workshop events during Carers Week, introducing carers to neighbourhood houses and what they offer and acknowledging their carer role.</p> <p>In 2024 carers who participated in the Knox carers exercise class enjoyed a Carers Week celebration lunch. Knox also hosted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers Mingle event in partnership with Carers Victoria in March 2024, acknowledging and celebrating the unpaid work that carers do. This event was attended by 79 local carers.</li> <li>• Carers Forum event in partnership with local mental health services in October 2024 on World Mental Health Day, providing 80 carers with information, presentations and celebrating all carers do. This Forum was co-designed and presented by carers,</li> </ul> <p>Knox annually celebrated International Day of People with a Disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 2022 with the launch of the Knox CARES strategy and presentation by disability advocate Carly Findlay.</li> <li>• December 2023 by participating in the Eastern Region Disability Advisory Committee forum sharing information and learnings about gaps and opportunities for people with a disability.</li> <li>• December 2024 by highlighting the work of</li> </ul>	<p>to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.</p>



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					Knox Disability Advisory Committee through a Knox News article and social media campaign.	
<b>4.11 Facilitate opportunities to profile the achievements of women, and to recognise and respond to health and wellbeing issues impacting women.</b>	Year 1-5	Annual recognition event for International Women's Day. Number of initiatives delivered.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Key initiatives have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mother-Daughter Wellness Festival (Mental Health Month 2022), focused on how young women and their carers can navigate the early teenage years, promote positive body image, and explore the role of food, movement, connection and self-talk as ways young girls can look after themselves.</li> <li>• Council's International Women's Day event 2023 recognised and raised awareness of the rise of homelessness and financial insecurity in older women and drew attention to gendered financial inequities. Attendees were encouraged to attend three financial literacy workshops to build their financial literacy and confidence.</li> <li>• In 2023 Knox led the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance's project - Preventing Homelessness in Older Women. This research project culminated in a presentation of findings via a webinar in November 2023, with advocacy efforts continuing through EAHA.</li> <li>• Intersectional Bystander Training was offered in 2023 to build skills to intervene when sexist comments are made.</li> <li>• For International Women's Day 2024, in</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<div>partnership with Monash Council, Knox Council screened the film, Equal the Contest.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council in partnership with Your Libraries facilitated a Breast Cancer Awareness session during Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October 2024).</li></ul>	



### THEME 5: Knox strives to be a liveable community

What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>5.1 Support and advocate for culturally safe health and wellbeing services supporting First Nations people to be located in Knox</b>	Year 2-5	Undertake service planning to understand community needs. Develop relationships with relevant services to understand their needs; Identify opportunities for co-location or re-location of services.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>In 2023 Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place (MMIGP) commenced operating selected health and wellbeing services at H.V. Jones Reserve Community Facility. Services include men's groups, yarning circles, art classes and various opportunities for community to come together to discuss issues particularly the impact of the Referendum on community. Over the last three years all Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation's have expressed an interest in creating a presence in Knox and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last two years Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service (BWAHS) and MMIGP have established spaces in Knox.</li> <li>• Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency and Ngwala Willumbong have partnered with these two Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to deliver popup services in their facilities.</li> <li>• MMIGP currently holding the lease arrangement with Knox Council for HV Jones facilities and BWAHS have facilities in Bayswater.</li> <li>• Koorie Basketball, Basketball Clinic and various yarning circles have been delivered in Knox.</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
<b>5.2 Develop and implement the Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan</b>	Year 1-2	Plan developed and endorsed by Council	<b>Sustainable Infrastructure</b>  Community Access and Support	Behind schedule ◆	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The commencement of this action was delayed until 2023-24 due to being unable to recruit a replacement Sustainable Transport Planner. In 2023-24, a consultant has been appointed to prepare a new Knox Mobility and Access Action Plan, a draft will be presented to Council in 25-26.</li> <li>Broad community engagement is currently underway along with Access Audits at key locations across the municipality.</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>5.3 Continue to explore opportunities to strengthen the accessibility of Council and community run events, for people with reduced mobility, neurodiversity and other barriers to participation</b>	Year 1-5	Accessibility and inclusion considerations implemented at Council-run events. Updated community events permit checklist to considerations related to access and inclusion.	<b>Active and Creative Communities</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Council continues to produce access keys for our two major events, Knox Fest and Carols by Candlelight.</p> <p>The Festivals and Events team will continue to work with Community Access &amp; Support staff to enhance event accessibility, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>physical access</li> <li>car parking</li> <li>quiet spaces</li> <li>inclusive communication</li> <li>assistive technology</li> <li>accessible toilets and facilities</li> </ul> <p>Council also delivered the “Keeping It REEL” program - a free trial fishing program that sought to increase the social participation of older men living in Knox. The men who participated had limited or no social connections, lived alone and had</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					existing barriers that impacted on their participation in other social programs. The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive. For some, the fishing outings were the highlight of the week and in fact, has led to self-organised future fishing outings together, upon conclusion of the program.	
<b>5.4 Support the inclusion of women, people with a disability, and culturally diverse and LGBTIQ+ groups in Knox sporting clubs and leisure facilities as a way of increasing community participation</b>	Year 1-5	Number of club development activities delivered with sporting groups. Upgrades to amenities at sporting facilities to support diverse groups.	<b>Active and Creative Communities</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Knox Council continues to work directly with sporting clubs to ensure they are inclusive and welcoming to all. Club development workshops delivered over the past two years aim to encourage best practice approaches across all our sporting clubs and to provide a setting for peer-to-peer learning. A highlight of these workshops was the Female Participation Forum held in October 2022, as well as the Alcohol Best Practice session in 2023.</p> <p>In 2024, workshops have included Rainbow Ready Clubs – LGBTIQ+ program, Clubs Say No to Family Violence, and two Fair Access Policy club forums. A regular newsletter is also sent to club with resources, links and updates on club development.</p> <p>Facility upgrades and renewals include the refurbishment and installation of modular pavilions which involve all gender changerooms and accessible toilets, at the Marie Wallace Bayswater and Gilbert Park, as well as the opening of the new</p>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.





What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					pavilion at Fairpark Reserve.	
<b>5.5 Explore opportunities to embed the principles of access and equity in the development and delivery of Council's Open Space Asset Management Plan</b>	Year 2-3	A new Open Space Asset Management Plan is developed and adopted by Council, with specific reference to access and equity.	<b>Sustainable Infrastructure</b>  Community Access and Support	Behind schedule ◆	This project has been delayed for operational reasons, and is expected to commence in Year 3 or 4 of the Strategy.  The Strategic Open Space Planning team within Knox will be developing a draft Open Space strategy for presentation to Council. Background work is being completed, with a draft Project Plan in development.	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>5.6 Explore opportunities to support people experiencing disadvantage to develop skills and gain practical experience that enhances work readiness</b>	Year 3-5	Source external funding to develop and pilot an inclusive work experience and skill development program at Knox.	<b>Community Strengthening,</b>  <b>People, Culture and Development</b>  <b>Economic Development</b>	On schedule ▶	Council has established a Neighbourhood Houses Round Table, with one of the primary purposes to discuss the opportunities available to people experiencing disadvantage.  Through Council's Grant Program, Orana Neighbourhood House has been funded for a commercial coffee machine and barista trainer costs to develop work ready skills to enhance work readiness.	This action will commence in Year 3 (Subject to external funding), to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>5.7 Partner with local businesses to champion their role in providing inclusive and equitable</b>	Year 1-5	Number of opportunities identified to engage the business	<b>Economic Development</b>  <b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pilot project on workplace mental health was undertaken with local manufacturing business, Nature's Organics from July-November 2023.</li> <li>Council funded staff to participate in the online mental health program 'Staying Ahead'</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
employment opportunities, as well as in addressing social issues including mental health and family violence		community; Promotion and engagement activities undertaken with local business			<p>developed by Prevention United. Unfortunately, this pilot was unsuccessful. The nature of the business partner meant that staff had limited access to technology, and their participation in the program was not scheduled into the workday. Furthermore, Prevention United ceased offering this program as of December 2022, limiting ongoing engagement or opportunities to retriial the program in another business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local food distribution hub was established in September 2023. Managed by Outer East Foodshare, the hub provides a central location for sorting and storing rescued food. Outer East Foodshare have established a partnership with Costco and are currently redistributing over 300 kilograms of rescued food per day through this partnership. Further avenues for food rescue are being explored across the Eastern Metropolitan Region (Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges) to reduce food waste and support people who may otherwise go without. Negotiations are in progress between Outer East Foodshare and Council for a 5-year lease.</li> <li>• Knox City Council hosted a networking event in March 2025 for woman in small business for International Women's Day. We invited four diverse local women business owners to share their stories to empower participants and enable</li> </ul>	Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
					<p>connection with Council and other businesses. There were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ over 100 registrations</li> <li>➤ 60 people attending</li> <li>➤ with 70% of attendees who completed the survey agreeing the event was useful to make connections</li> <li>➤ majority attendees rating a high level of satisfaction for the speakers of the event.</li> </ul>	
<b>5.8 Recognise and plan for the disproportionate impacts of emergency events on groups already experiencing disadvantage, and support their needs during relief and recovery efforts</b>	Year 1-5	Under gender impact assessments as relevant. Identify and develop relationships with diverse groups. Completion of the community resilience mapping.	<b>Emergency Management</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Over the 3 years of the strategy, Emergency Management teams have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had a specific focus on At Risk people and cohorts in the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan</li> <li>• Used consistent language of “At-Risk” in line with State Shared Responsibility Framework – led by Department of Families Fairness and Housing and is related to providing effective relief and recovery</li> <li>• Strengthened capabilities of Emergency Relief Networks in line with the Municipal Emergency Resource Program for the Knox-Maroonah-Yarra Ranges Cluster of councils.</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.
<b>5.9 Activate Council facilities and open spaces (including through creative placemaking</b>	Year 1-5	Number of events and activities delivered. Promotional	<b>Active and Creative Communities</b>  Community	On schedule ▶	<p>In the 2022-23 financial year two Council facilities have become available for community organisation through an Expression of Interest process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
initiatives) to support the development of social connections		activities undertaken to increase usage.	Strengthening		<p>took occupancy at HV Community Room, Ferntree Gully in February 2023 marking the first time an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation has been located in Knox.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knox Toy Library expanded to take occupancy of the whole of Rosa Benedikt Community Centre in July 2023 enabling additional parenting and play groups to utilise the space.</li> </ul> <p>In the 2023-24 financial year, Council facilities continued to provide welcoming places for community to develop social connections. The Move Your Way program, working with local businesses to offer free physical activities for the community, activating open spaces and facilities.</p> <p>Council has continued to support Neighbourhood Houses, Community organisations and Your Library to host a range of activities that improve and offer opportunities for social connection via Council's community grant program and via partnerships with a number of departments across Council.</p>	Strategy.
<b>5.10 Promote opportunities for volunteering in Knox to build social and community networks and reduce isolation</b>	Year 1-5	Funding of the volunteer stream through the Knox Community Partnership Fund.	<b>Community Strengthening</b>  <b>People, Culture and Development</b>	On schedule ▶	Through the Community Partnership Fund, Council has recommitted a further four year's funding (2022-2026) to Volunteer For Knox. This organisation is auspiced by the Knox Learning Alliance and located at Coonara Community House. They provide a volunteer matching service and training for volunteers and volunteer managers. A key annual initiative of Volunteer For Knox is the	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
		Review Council's volunteer policy (Year 3-4). Capture outcomes of Council volunteer roles through a survey (year 1-2).			<p>Volunteer Expo.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The April 2023 event was attended by over 400 people and 35 volunteering organisations.</li> <li>In 2024 the event moved to the Knox Civic Centre, allowing 40 volunteer organisations to be involved.</li> <li>In 2025 the event was attended by approximately 550 attendees and had 43 stall holders</li> </ul> <p>Council continues to provide volunteer opportunities for our community such as through our Meals On Wheel programs, Your Library and various sustainability programs.</p> <p>In the first year of the strategy, volunteers were recognised under the Australia Day Awards. This was expanded in May 2024 to become the Knox Community Awards. Expanding the program enabled more volunteers to be recognised across a wider range of services. The Knox Community Awards were held again in 2025. The Awards provide an excellent opportunity to showcase and celebrate the contributions volunteers make to community life in Knox.</p>	
<b>5.11 Partner with Knox Libraries to provide activities that support life-learning</b>	Year 1-5	Number of activities delivered; Contributing	<b>Community Strengthening</b>	On schedule ▶	Officers have continued to foster and develop a strong partnership with the Your Library team, various activities and events have been held such as:	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
learning, build social connections and improve access to technology		to the development of a plan for activating Knox Libraries (development led by Your Library).			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Breast Cancer Awareness session</li> <li>• Raising awareness of Homelessness via an origami activity</li> <li>• Facilitating a community Choir</li> <li>• Offering technology support classes</li> <li>• Book clubs and story time sessions that have seen numbers exceed 80 families per session.</li> <li>• Presentation from Council staff on Knox demographics and community issues</li> </ul> <p>Your Library is committed to working in partnership with Council to provide a range of activities and events that promote lifelong learning and social connection opportunities.</p> <p>In March 2024, the new Knox Library was opened within Westfield Knox and incorporated a new space for young people, 'The Youth Hive'. This space will strengthen Council's partnership with Your Library, having youth workers onsite five afternoons per week to support youth engagement.</p>	the term of the Strategy.
<b>5.12 Embed Universal Design principles (at a minimum) into the development and design of new Council facilities, buildings and open space</b>	Year 1-5	Demonstrated use of Universal Design Principles in the design of new facilities. Gender Impact	<b>Sustainable Infrastructure</b> Major Projects	On schedule ▶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal Design Principles are included during the design stage of major projects. For 2022-23 this included the design of the Knox Library.</li> <li>• Cycling Action Plan identifies the need for utilising and progressing universal design principles.</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.



What will we do?	When will we do it?	What are our outputs?	Council lead and partners	Status	Summary: Y1- 3	Future
		Assessments conducted where appropriate. Community engagement facilitated to understand the needs and specific requirements of user groups.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principles are not a mandated component for Knox; however Knox staff have identified the principles as an on-the-ground action when considering design decisions.</li> <li>For buildings, the Australian Standards and Building Code requirements set the standards at a State Government level.</li> </ul>	
<b>5.13 Continue to deliver the Capital Works Retrofitting Program to improve the accessibility of Council owned buildings and facilities</b>	Year 1-5	Number of projects delivered annually.	<b>Community Infrastructure</b>	On schedule ▶	<p>Over the past 3 years the Capital Works Program has continued to retrofit and improve accessibility across a number of Council owned facilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eildon Parade Children Centre accessible ramps were installed to the building main access and carpark</li> <li>Marie Wallace Junior Football Pavilion accessible ramp installed to main entry change facility and social facility</li> <li>Carrington Leisure Centre and Rowville Community Centre accessible doors installed at both sites.</li> <li>The Basin Community House portico has been completed</li> <li>The Boronia Progress Hall access ramp is nearing completion</li> </ul>	This action will continue to be delivered and reported on for the term of the Strategy.

## 8.4 Knox Arts and Culture Committee Representation 2025-2027

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services, Emma Bentley
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole Columbine
<b>Executive:</b>	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

At its Meeting held on 23 June 2025, Council endorsed a process to re-establish the Arts and Culture Committee and adopted a revised Terms of Reference (refer to Attachment 1).

Since that time, an expression of interest process has been undertaken to seek new members for the Knox Arts and Culture Committee.

This report seeks Council approval to appoint a total of ten members to the Arts and Culture Committee for a two-year period concluding in September 2027.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to appoint the following new applicants to the Knox Arts and Culture Committee as presented in Confidential Attachment 2 to the Arts and Culture Committee, to serve a two-year term concluding on 1 September 2027.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Category:</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Community Representative</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Professional Industry Representative</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Professional Industry Representative</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Professional Industry Representative</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Professional Industry Representative</b>

### 1. DISCUSSION

The function of the Council's Advisory Committees is to facilitate stakeholder engagement which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's goals and strategies under the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) is an advisory committee that provides Council with strategic advice on issues relating to the advancement of arts and culture in Knox. It assists in promoting greater awareness and understanding of arts and cultural services in Knox, and the value of arts and culture in supporting community health and wellbeing, celebration, community safety, cultural tourism, economic development and placemaking. The Committee



also provides Council with direct insight into the local needs, interests and trends in arts, culture and creative industry development in Knox, thus guiding the priorities for service delivery.

At its Meeting held on 23 June 2025, Council approved the process for seeking new members for a two-year term on the Arts and Culture Committee until 1 September 2027.

The Terms of Reference stipulates the following membership structure:

- A maximum of eight community members.
- A maximum of four industry members.
- A maximum of two Councillors, with two confirmed members, being Councillor Peter Lockwood and Deputy Mayor Councillor Glen Atwell.

Relevant Council officers also participate in meetings, and offer advice, governance and general support to the group.

Meetings take place four times per year, and the Committee operates alongside a Terms of Reference (located in Attachment 1).

### **1.1 Expression of Interest Process**

Council sought expressions of interest from community and industry representatives to submit applications for Committee membership using the following promotional platforms:

- Social media posts on Council and Arts and Events Facebook and Instagram pages.
- Circulation via all available Council platforms.
- Advertising within Seek Volunteer and Better Impact Volunteer platforms.
- Targeted emails to groups and individuals within local arts and cultural networks within Knox.

Promotional activities directed interested parties to Council's Arts and Culture Committee website where information was provided about the role and purpose of the Committee, the Terms of Reference, the selection criteria, key dates, the process for application and Panel assessment, and a link to the online submission portal, Better Impact, which is Council's volunteer management system.

### **1.2 Applications and Assessment**

A total of 12 applications were received via an online application form comprising five questions that directly related to the selection criteria as outlined in the Committee Terms of Reference, including the option to upload a current resume and Linked In profile.

Of the 12 applications received, all were considered eligible for assessment as they met the essential eligibility criteria, being that they must "Live, work or study in Knox, or regularly participate in Knox Arts and Cultural activities." All applicants indicated that they had read the Committee's Terms of Reference, which was also an essential part of the online application process.

Applications were assessed by a Panel comprising Councillor Peter Lockwood; Emma Bentley, Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services; and Jeannie Mueller, Team Leader Creative Placemaking, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

The Panel assessed each of the 12 applications alongside the following comparative selection criteria using a weighted scoring matrix:

- Demonstrate an interest and knowledge of Arts and Cultural activities within Knox, including services, events, venues, programs, projects and initiatives offered through Council, Community and local Businesses;
- Contribute specialist skills and experience in one of more areas of Arts and Culture, including but not limited to Cultural Development, Arts Management, Public Art, Arts Facilities, Programming, Arts Education, Event Management, Placemaking, Cultural Tourism, Arts Marketing, Community Engagement, Creative Industry Development, Arts Funding, Performance or Creative Arts Practice; and
- Offer insight into the social, cultural, environmental and economic factors impacting the Arts in Knox.

Each applicant was assessed using a systemic approach for review, and received a total score out of 30, with each of the above criteria weighted at ten points. Those with the highest Panel scores across the three points of criteria have been selected for inclusion in the 2025-2027 Committee. Please refer to Confidential Attachment 2: Knox Arts and Culture Committee 2025-2027 Recommendations.

The recommended selection of applicants for membership to the 2025-2027 Arts and Culture Committee represent six local community members and four arts industry professionals, and together they represent a diverse range of skills, interests, disciplines and demographics.

#### **1.2.1 Resubmitting Applicants**

The Terms of Reference stipulates that membership is for a two-year term, however, “All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however, continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered.”

Resubmitting members from the 2023-2025 Committee, were required to apply using the same online application process as new members, ensuring that the process for reviewing all applications was consistent irrespective of if the applicant was a new or resubmitting applicant.

Council received a total of three returning member applications from the 2023-2025 Committee, all of whom were eligible to reapply as they have not exceeded a consecutive four-year term. Of these three resubmitting members, all have been recommended for extension for a further two years.

#### **1.2.2 New Applicants**

Council received a total of nine new member applications, who applied in the same manner as re-applying members, via the online portal, and assessed alongside the same selection criteria, using the same weighted scoring matrix, as described in Item 1.2.

Of the new applicants, seven have been recommended for inclusion in the 2025-2027 Committee.

In summary, a total of four industry representatives and six community representatives have been recommended based on the total Panel scores, offering a mix of resubmitting applicants from the 2023-2025 Committee and a strong suite of new applicants.

### **1.3 Membership Categories**

The proposed members fall into the following categories as defined within the Terms of Reference:

#### **1.3.1 Councillor Representatives for 2025**

- Councillor Peter Lockwood.
- Deputy Mayor Councillor Glen Atwell.

#### **1.3.2 Community and Industry Representatives**

Refer to Confidential Attachment 2 for the Recommended 2025 Panel Assessment Summary and list of Recommended Members of the 2025-2027 Committee.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

Expressions of interest for the Arts and Culture Committee were sought through a variety of promotional platforms as detailed in Item 1.1, with a period of public exhibition being a total of four weeks. The Better Impact Volunteer management platform was used to manage the online application process and inform a consistent best practice approach to engaging with new and returning member applications.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Arts and Culture Committee will provide advice to Council in relation to the broad social implications associated with the development of art, cultural and heritage policies and strategic plans.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental or amenity issues related to this process.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The cost to Council to support the Arts Committee is approximately \$2,000 per annum and is provided within Council's annual budget. This sum is made up of costs for catering and advertising. Council officer time is also allocated to support the Committee's work.

## **7. RISKS**

The major risks associated with the appointment of the Arts and Culture Committee primarily relate to governance, representation and participation. These include the potential for conflicts of interest, underrepresentation of key community or industry voices, lack of active participation by members or misalignment between Committee advice and Council's strategic priorities. These risks will be managed in line with Council's Risk Management Framework by ensuring

transparency in the selection process, adherence to the Terms of Reference and regular evaluation of Committee performance. Conflicts of interest will be managed through member declarations and governance oversight by Council officers. Representation risks are mitigated through a transparent approach and participation will be supported through onboarding, clear expectations and planning.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity**

Strategy 2.2 - Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.

Strategy 2.4 - There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

This report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, as it does not raise any human rights issues.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidential Attachment 2 is included in the confidential agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to personal information, being the names and details of prospective committee members which would be unreasonable to disclose publicly, or to disclosure before they are appointed.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Terms of Reference - Knox Arts & Culture Committee - 2025-2029 [8.4.1 - 6 pages]



## Knox Arts & Culture Committee

<b>Directorate:</b>	Connected Communities		
<b>Approval by:</b>	Council	<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Coordinator Arts & Cultural Services
<b>Approval Date:</b>	23 June 2025	<b>Version Number:</b>	5
<b>Review Date:</b>	23 June 2029		

### 1. Purpose

The function of the Knox Arts and Culture Committee is to facilitate stakeholder engagement which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's goals and strategies under the Community and Council Plan.

The Knox Arts and Culture Committee (the Committee) provides Council with strategic advice on issues relating to the advancement of arts and culture in Knox. It assists in promoting greater awareness and understanding of arts and cultural services in Knox, and the value of arts and culture in supporting community health and wellbeing. The Committee also provides Council with direct insight into the local needs, interests and trends in arts, culture and creative industry development in Knox.

### 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Council on arts and cultural issues;
- Promote access to a diverse range of arts and cultural activities within Knox;
- Assist Council in the development of arts and cultural policy, procedure and planning;
- Contribute ideas and recommendations on the key service portfolios of the Arts and Cultural services Unit, including but not limited to Festivals and Events, Community and Public Arts, and Cultural Venues;
- Advocate and promote arts and cultural development in Knox; and
- Actively network and build connections and opportunities for increased collaboration between the Knox Community and Council through arts and cultural initiatives.

### 3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The Arts & Culture Committee shall comprise the following:

- A maximum of 8 community members.
- A maximum of 4 industry members (including any relevant government agency representatives).
- 2 Councillors.

#### 3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members will be advertised on Council's website, digital platforms, publications and through local networks. Applicants must make an application via an online expression of interest process.

Submissions for community and industry membership will be assessed alongside the following selection criteria:



- Live, work or study in Knox, or regularly participate in Knox Arts and Cultural activities;
- Demonstrate an interest and knowledge of Arts and Cultural activities within Knox, including services, events, venues, programs, projects and initiatives offered through Council, Community and local Businesses;
- Contribute specialist skills and experience in one of more areas of Arts and Culture, including but not limited to Cultural Development, Arts Management, Public Art, Arts Facilities, Programming, Arts Education, Event Management, Placemaking, Cultural Tourism, Arts Marketing, Community Engagement, Creative Industry Development, Arts Funding, Performance or Creative Arts Practice; and
- Offer insight into the social, cultural, environmental and economic factors impacting the wider Knox community and how these may influence local arts and cultural service delivery.

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit.
- The method of appointment will be via an online expression of interest process.
- Members will be appointed for a two-year term.
- All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered, unless otherwise recommended by the Committee Chair and endorsed by Council on a case by case basis.
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and industry representative members.
- Casual vacancies which occur due to community or industry members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments, may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms, or where the previous applications are unsuitable, new members may be recommended and must apply as per Item 3.1. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate/s to the committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.
- Community and Industry representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the Committee member will provide an appropriate briefing of the committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation within the meeting.
- The committee Chair may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.
- The committee Chair may invite guests to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

### **3.2 Councillors**

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.



The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, review Agendas and Minutes, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community and Council interest being considered at meetings.

### **3.3 Council Officers**

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee.

### **3.4 Arts Assessment Panel Membership**

The Arts Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that assesses and makes recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of public art and civic art collection items, as per the [Knox Public Art Policy](#) (2022 – 2026). Community and Councillor representation on the AAP is derived from the Knox Arts and Culture Committee, joining key internal officers.

At the commencement of the two-year term for Knox Arts and Culture Committee members, between two and four community/industry members will be nominated to be members of the AAP for their Committee term, with a preference for nominated members to demonstrate experience in visual arts management. At least one Councillor will be also nominated from the Committee, who will take on the role of AAP Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply. Other Councillors may also take part in the AAP, by negotiation with the AAP Chair.

Meetings of the AAP are ad-hoc as required (approximately 4 per year), and some decisions may be made via email. The AAP members will regularly report back to the Knox Arts and Culture Committee on outcomes.

## **4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making**

The committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

## **5. Meeting Procedures**

The committee will meet approximately every three months with a minimum of four meetings per year, and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the committee each year. There will be no designated quorum for Council Committees. A Council Committee can proceed if Councillor nominee/s are not present at the meeting.

The committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings, and its meetings are not open to the public.

At the commencement of each financial year the committee will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. This will generally be aligned with the Community and Council Plan. The committee may also highlight any emerging issues which will also be documented. For efficiency purposes the business of the committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.



## 6. Chair

The position of Chairperson shall be held by a Councillor and shall be reviewed annually immediately following Councillor appointments to committees. The position of Chairperson is to be agreed upon between Councillors. When this cannot be achieved, the Mayor of the day shall determine the Chair.

If the Chairperson is not present at a meeting, any other Councillor who has been appointed to the committee shall be appointed Chairperson. In the absence of any other Councillor representative/s, a staff member appointed by the relevant Director may Chair the meeting.

## 7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the committee not less than 4 days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

- (a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;
- (b) be clearly expressed;
- (c) be self-explanatory; and
- (d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the committee.

Draft meeting notes must be:

- (a) submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within 7 days of the meeting;
- (b) distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and
- (c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

In compliance with section 58 of the 2020 Act and the requirements of the Council's Public Transparency Policy the agenda and minutes of this group will be made available on Council's website unless:

- the information contained in the agenda and/or minutes is confidential by virtue of the 2020 Act or any other Act; or
- the public availability of the information has been deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or nominee to be contrary to the public interest.

## 8. Voting

As this is an advisory committee, voting on issues is not required. Any recommendations will generally be developed through consensus. Where a matter cannot be agreed the differing opinions should be clearly expressed in the notes of the meeting.

## 9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;
- Impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;





- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Panel will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in section 131 of the 2020 Act and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- as soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Group, they must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of the Advisory Committee may be invited to attend annual training on Conduct and Interest provisions run by the Governance team.

## 10. Reporting

The committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the committee the report will be presented to Council.

## 11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Connected Communities Directorate.

## 12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and should take care not to respond as a representative of the committee.

## 13. Review Date

Council Committees must be reviewed on a regular basis, with a review date generally not exceeding a 4 year period. If the committee continues to have a relevant function at the end of the standard review period, a report must be presented to Council including a review of the committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue to act for a further period.

## 14. Meals

Council will provide reasonable meals for Council Committee meetings at times that immediately precede, follow or extend through normal meal times. The provision of meals will be determined by the CEO or delegate, and be within the capacity of the relevant department's budget.



## 15. Administration Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter these Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate).

Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact.

Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council or delegated Committee.

## 8.5 Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Recruitment

**Final Report Destination:** Council  
**Paper Type:** For Decision  
**Author:** Positive and Healthy Ageing Program Lead, Anna Lawton  
**Manager:** Manager Community Access and Support, Gail Power  
**Executive:** Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

### SUMMARY

The focus of the Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee (KAAAC) is to inform Council on issues impacting seniors and promote active ageing within Council and in the wider community.

The purpose of KAAAC is to inform service programming which supports quality decision making and in turn, the achievements of Council's key directions, initiatives and strategies under the Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 and the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

In June 2025 an Expression of Interest (EOI) and recruitment process was conducted for new Committee members for up to five available vacancies as follows: one community representative and four professional/industry representatives. These vacancies arose from:

- A community member resignation in February 2025.
- Two professional/industry positions that remained unfilled from the 2024 recruitment.
- Two existing members' terms expiring in August 2025.

This report seeks approval to appoint new Committee members and the re-appointment of an existing Committee member for a two-year term from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2027 as detailed in Confidential Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Thank all the community members who took the time to apply for the Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee.
2. Appoint the following current Knox Active Advisory Committee member for a second term for the period 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2027 as presented in Confidential Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments.

Name	Category
1.	Professional/Industry Representative

3. Appoint the following new applicants to KAAAC (as per the Terms of Reference) for the period 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2027 as presented in Confidential Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments.

Name	Category
2.	Community Representative
3.	Professional/Industry Representative
4.	Professional/Industry Representative
5.	Professional/Industry Representative

4. Appoint the following additional Professional/Industry Representative for the period 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2027 as presented in Confidential Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments.

Name	Category
6.	Professional/Industry Representative

5. Thank the outgoing member of Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee for his valuable contribution: Gerard Meagher - Professional/Industry Representative.

## 1. DISCUSSION

The Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee (KAAAC) has been established to advise Council on strategic issues regarding senior Knox residents and provide valuable information to support the decision making of Council. The Committee provides advice to help improve planning for an ageing population across Council's services, provides advice to Council on emerging issues affecting all seniors within the Knox community and provides input and advice on information to community consultation processes related to seniors and healthy ageing issues.

The role of Councillors on Advisory Committees is to participate in the meetings, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on Committees at Council Meetings and on issues of community interest being considered at meetings.

In terms of specific advice and recommendations arising from the Advisory Committee Meetings, they can be either tabled at Council Meetings by sitting Councillors on the Advisory Committee, and/or through the Director Connected Communities to the Executive Leadership Team and Councillors.

This report contains the KAAAC Membership Recruitment for the period September 2025 to August 2027.

### 1.1 Selection Process

The selection and recruitment of new members for KAAAC followed the process outlined in Section 3.1 - Selection and Recruitment of Community and Professional/Industry Representative Members in the current KAAAC Terms of Reference (refer to Attachment 2 - Terms of Reference Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee 2025 2029).

The promotion of the Expression of Interest (EOI) process occurred through Council's electronic mail, and via various networks during June 2025. Council received 11 applications, with all applications either fully or partially meeting the criteria, deeming them eligible for assessment.

Six applications were received from community representatives and five applications were received from professional/industry representatives.

The vacant Committee positions to be filled through the selection process included up to **one** community representative and up to **four** professional/industry representatives.

A Selection Panel was established to review and assess the applications in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference. Two Council officers and an independent community member (also a past member of KAAAC) progressed the recruitment process and recommendations were made to the Councillors assigned to this Committee - Councillor Meagan Baker (Chair), and Councillor Parisa Considine.

The following selection criteria were used when assessing the applications:

- Being a Knox resident, a Knox focused organisation, agency or business or have a specific set of professional skills and background that will help achieve the purpose and objectives of the KAAAC as articulated in the Terms of Reference.
- Demonstrated interest in joining the Committee.
- Relevant knowledge, skills and experience.
- Ability to identify current and emerging challenges facing seniors within the Knox community.

All written applications were assessed against the selection criteria and short interviews were conducted over four days on 15, 16, 17 and 18 July 2025 with five of the community applicants and five industry/professional applicants. One community applicant withdrew their interest prior to the interview stage.

Recommendations and assessment information for each applicant was then provided to KAAAC Councillor Committee members on 28 July 2025 for additional assessment and confirmation of selection.

The Councillors were both supportive without amendment of the officer recommendations and determined that additional interviews were not required.

A maximum of six professional/industry representatives is outlined in the KAAAC Terms of Reference, however, there is precedence for the total number of members to be exceeded, after consideration on a case by-case basis, where a recommendation was made by the Committee Chair and endorsed by Council.

On this occasion, given the strength and number of applications from professional/industry representatives in June 2025, officers recommend a seventh professional/industry representative is worthy of consideration. Noting this is an exception to the Terms of Reference, it is, however, recommended at this time, as it will add further strength and sector engagement by this additional appointment.

This recommendation was supported by both KAAAC Councillor representatives and Councillor Baker as the Committee Chair.

Recommendations and the assessment of applicants are provided in Confidential Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

Council officers invited community members, and professional and industry associations relevant to the purpose of the Committee to nominate suitable representatives to participate in KAAAC. Information calling for nominees to join KAAAC was placed on Council's website, through Council community email networks and newsletters, and advertising via the Better Impact volunteer website.

## **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

KAAAC continues to be an enabler towards achieving greater civic engagement and participation of the community in Knox by creating a formal structure for the provision of advice, feedback and recommendations to Council and Council officers on topics and issues directly or indirectly affecting seniors and healthy ageing. Topics and issues include ageism, climate response, community infrastructure, dementia, emergency management, physical activity, technology, and transport. Committee members have taken an active role in promoting healthy and active ageing and encouraging meaningful participation of all residents in the social, economic, and cultural life of the community.

## **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

The KAAAC provides input and advice to Council on matters relating to environmental and amenity issues as applicable. There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. Council supports the Committee through a small allocation of resources within the Community Access and Support Department budget. Council officers also provide administrative support to this Committee.

## **7. RISKS**

The major risks associated with Council not consulting with the senior community are:

- Stigma and age discrimination - lack of consultation can contribute to stigma and age discrimination against senior individuals further marginalising this population; and
- Public perception - inadequate response to supporting seniors in our community can erode public trust and diminish community support for initiatives aimed at addressing positive and healthy ageing.

The focus of the KAAAC is to inform Council on issues impacting seniors and promote active ageing within Council and in the wider community.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity**

Strategy 2.1 - Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Attachment 1 - Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Selection Panel Appointments is included in the confidential agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to personal information, being the names and details of prospective Committee members which would be unreasonable to disclose publicly, or to disclosure before they are appointed.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 2 - Terms of Reference Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee 2025 2029  
[8.5.1 - 5 pages]



# Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee

Directorate:	Connected Communities		
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Positive and Healthy Ageing Program Lead
Approval Date:	28 January 2025	Version Number:	1
Review Date:	28 January 2029		

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee (the Committee) is to provide strategic guidance and stakeholder perspectives to promote positive and healthy ageing for Knox seniors.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Knox Active Advisory Committee are:

- To report to Council on its work and advise Council of strategic issues from the perspective of senior residents of Knox;
- To assist Council in the development of policy and action planning about issues impacting seniors, such as social and digital isolation, ageism and health complexities;
- To work with Council officers to ensure that Council's policies, programs and protocols reflect the needs and rights of senior residents;
- To provide a central point for Council and the Knox community to identify issues affecting the seniors community; and
- To promote positive and healthy ageing within Council and the wider Knox community.

## 3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee shall comprise the following:

- A maximum of eight (8) community members (please add any specialist requirements)
- A maximum of six (6) industry members (including any relevant government agency representatives)
- Two (2) Councillors

### 3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Professional Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members and industry or professional representatives will be on Council's website, digital platforms and through local networks. Applicants must apply via an expression of interest process, including email.

Submissions will be assessed alongside the following selection criteria:

- Has lived experience as a senior and/or interest in and good working knowledge of the needs of seniors





- Offers insight into the current and emerging challenges facing older people within the Knox community to enjoy active, healthy and independent lives
- Live, work or study in Knox

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and professional/ industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit;
- Members will be appointed for a two-year term;  
All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will be considered on a case by case basis;
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and professional/industry representative members;
- Casual vacancies which occur due to community members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate to the Committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term;
- Professional/industry representatives unable to attend a Committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the appointed professional/ industry representative will provide an appropriate briefing of the Committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation to the meeting.

The Committee may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the Committee.

Guests may also be invited to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally be for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the Committee.

### **3.2 Councillors**

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the Committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the Committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community interest being considered at meetings.

### **3.3 Council Officers**

Council officers will be nominated to support the Committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the Committee.

## **4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making**

The Committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council. The Committee provides advice or makes recommendations to Council and staff to assist them in their decision making.



## 5. Meeting Procedures

The Committee will hold a minimum of 5 meetings throughout the year, with the option to schedule a sixth meeting should the need arise. An annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the Committee in each year.

The Committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings and its meetings are not open to the public.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and respectful discussion;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as practicable on a consensus basis.

From time to time, the Committee may decide that a joint meeting of two or more Council Committees will be beneficial for progressing the work of the Committee or for sharing ideas and providing updates on key issues of relevance in progressing the work of the Council Plan. Such committee meetings will only occur where requested and agreed by two or more Council Committees.

## 6. Chair

The position of Chairperson shall be held by a Councillor and shall be reviewed annually immediately following Councillor appointments to committees. The position of Chairperson is to be agreed upon between Councillors. When this cannot be achieved, the Mayor of the day shall determine the Chair.

If the Chairperson is not present at a meeting, any other Councillor who has been appointed to the Committee shall be appointed Chairperson. In the absence of any other Councillor representative/s, a staff member appointed by the relevant Director may Chair the meeting.

## 7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the Committee not less than four (4) days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting in digital format with the only exception being when a public holiday falls on the day agendas are due, in which case agendas are to be provided close of business three (3) days in advance.

Officer reports that fail to meet the timelines will only be permitted to be included in the relevant agendas of; Ordinary Council Meetings, Strategic Planning meeting, Issues Briefings or Special Committees, with the approval of the Mayor, and Council Committees with the approval of the Chair of the Committee.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

- (a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;
- (b) be clearly expressed;
- (c) be self-explanatory; and
- (d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the Committee.

Meeting notes must be:

- (a) distributed to all Committee Members within 14 days of the meeting; and



- (c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

## 8. Voting

As this is an advisory committee, voting on issues is not required. Any recommendations will generally be developed through consensus. Where a matter cannot be agreed, the differing opinions should be clearly expressed in the notes of the meeting.

## 9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;
- Impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Committee will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in the Local Government Act 2020 and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- Disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- Absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- As soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Committee, they must disclose the matter to the Committee before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of a Committee must agree to participate in training on the Conflict and Interest provisions which will be run a minimum of annually by the Governance team.

## 10. Planning and Reporting

The Committee will formulate an annual work plan that aligns with Council's current Community Plan and Council Plan and may also highlight emerging issues which will also be documented. The business of the Committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

The Committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the Committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the Committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the Committee the report will be presented to Council.



### 11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Connected Communities Directorate.

### 12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and then Council Communications team, if deemed necessary and should take care not to respond as a representative of the Committee.

### 13. Review Date

This Committee must be reviewed on a regular basis, with a review date generally not exceeding a four (4) year period. If the Committee has a relevant function at the end of the standard review period, a report must be presented to Council including a review of the Committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue to act for a further period.

### 14. Meals

Council will provide reasonable meals for the Committee meetings at times that immediately follow or extend through normal meal times. The provision of meals will be determined by the CEO or delegate, and be within the capacity of the relevant department's budget.

### 15. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Terms of Reference. Where an update does not materially alter this Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively and approved by the Chief Executive Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council or a relevant delegated Committee.

## 8.6 Proposed footpath Mountain Highway, Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue, The Basin

<b>Final Report Destination:</b>	Council
<b>Paper Type:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Coordinator Traffic and Transport, Shane Hardingham
<b>Manager:</b>	Manager - Strategic Infrastructure, Matthew Hanrahan
<b>Executive:</b>	Director - Infrastructure, Grant Thorne

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the status with the design of the proposed footpath connection in Mountain Highway, between Wicks Road and Claremont Avenue, The Basin, and seek a decision regarding the future construction of the footpath.

At its Ordinary Meeting of Council on 23 October 2023, Council considered a report regarding this footpath. Amongst other points, the resolution was that Council, receive a further report to consider the construction options for this project. This current report responds to that resolution.

In summary, the proposed footpath;

- Is estimated to cost \$1.5mil and is 8 – 10 times more expensive to construct than an equivalent footpath in Knox's more urban areas.
- Will extend the existing footpath which currently runs from The Basin shops and will ultimately provide greater connectivity to a wider residential catchment.
- Has historically been the highest ranked and worthy project in Council's Capital Works Program 4006 – New Footpaths.
- Is well supported by the local community.
- Will have significant impacts on resident's access along Mountain Highway during construction.
- If constructed, will postpone approximately 3 years of the next highest priority footpath projects.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes this report which highlights the challenges and complexities in delivering the next stage(s) of the new footpath along Mountain Hwy, which connects with the Basin shops.
2. Continue the design work and refer the project for construction funding in the future Capital Works Program (Approx. 2027/28 - 2029/30).

### 1. DISCUSSION

For context, Mountain Highway is a two-lane arterial road managed and maintained by the Department of Transport and Planning. Supporting an average 1640 traffic movements per day, with an 85th percentile speed of 54km/hr, it acts as a key access road to the Dandenong Ranges and hosts the very popular 1-in-20 cycling route which sees over 10% of traffic on weekends being on-road cyclists, traveling to the Dandenong Ranges from outside the municipality.

In 2018, Council constructed a footpath link along Mountain Hwy, The Basin from The Basin shops to the road closure at Wicks Road. This was Stage 1 of a staged footpath project between The Basin shops and Claremont Avenue and cost \$365,000. Delivery of Stage 1 of the path was well received by the community.

Since then, members of the community have advocated for the footpath to be extended to Claremont Avenue. An additional budget of \$300k was allocated towards the detailed design of this route in the 2024/25 budget.

Issues with the current unformed route:

- Crushed rock surface is subject to erosion in heavy rains.
- Path is narrow.
- Vehicles occasionally park on the surface forcing pedestrians onto the road.
- Waste bins on the path force pedestrians onto the road.
- The width is compromised due to ingress of grass/weeds overgrowing the surface.
- Hedges and tree branches overhang and block the path.
- The upper sections toward Claremont Avenue are “goat tracks” with a dirt surface.
- Pedestrians with prams, shopping trolleys, etc must walk on the road surface in places.

Extending the footpath would provide safe pedestrian access for an additional 250 - 300 households located along Mountain Hwy, the Claremont Avenue catchment, and off Toorak Avenue on the high side of Mountain Highway.

As currently designed, the new Stage 2 footpath extension (approximately 650 metre long) is proposed to be a 1.5m - 1.8m wide concrete footpath that will provide residents a path connection to:

- The Basin Triangle and The Basin local shops.
- Three local bus stops:
  - Outside 1389 Mountain Hwy/Clevedon Road,
  - Outside 1405 Mountain Hwy past the Claremont Avenue Walkway,
  - At the intersection of Claremont Avenue and Mountain Hwy.
- Fernbrook School, located off Mountain Hwy and Clevedon Road; and
- The Claremont Avenue walkway.

The presence of an existing concrete footpath at the midpoint of the requested extension, leading into Claremont Avenue, from Mountain Highway, provides a logical point to potentially stage the project.





**Figure 1 – Existing and proposed Mountain Highway Paths**

### 1.2 Pedestrian Demand:

Pedestrian surveys, on 15 March 2023, observed 31 pedestrians walking between the Claremont Avenue walkway (blue line) to Wicks Road and an additional 18 pedestrians walking from Claremont Avenue walkway to the intersection of Claremont Avenue. A recent pedestrian survey on 26 June 2025, recorded 26 pedestrians walking between the Claremont Avenue walkway (blue line) to Wicks Road. It is reasonable to assume that delivery of the footpath, will result in an uplift of users of the facility, however quantifying that growth is difficult. Some of the consultation feedback indicated that people are choosing to not walk due to concerns with the current route.

### 1.3 Construction Challenges

Mountain Highway is an arterial road managed by the Department of Transport and Planning. All traffic management required during investigation and construction requires approval from the Department. This approval will likely limit working times to between 9:30am to 2:30pm. This typical arrangement will prolong the construction program, which increases cost.



As part of the investigation and construction process, it is expected that significant road closures will be required to be put in place that will affect access through Mountain Hwy. It is proposed that Mountain Hwy will be reduced to a one lane road for approximately:

- Three to four (3-4) weeks during the site survey and investigation period
- Four (4) to six (6) months during construction phase subject to weather conditions

Where construction management staff are present on site, pedestrian and cycling access could potentially be maintained subject to how the site is managed.

The road reserve of Mountain Highway follows the natural contours of Mt Dandenong. The average width of the verge between kerb and embankment is approximately 1m. The embankment grades steeply towards the properties, with most sections densely vegetated. A retaining wall is required to construct a 1.5m wide footpath. The length of this structure is approximately 520m. Therefore, it is critical to understand the ground condition as well as locations of underground services. Where necessary, the footpath will require additional pedestrian fencing atop the retaining walls.



**Figure 2 – Topography of Mountain Highway, narrow edges with drop-off to driveway**



The original external geotechnical consultant appointed to undertake geotechnical investigations and underground service locating withdrew from the project due to complexities of this task. The natural terrain prohibits access for contractors to physically locate underground services. This is critical information to ensure borehole drilling will not damage those services. Internal considerations are underway to consider using a higher tier geotechnical consultant for this investigation, along with the mechanism to procure their services. This investigation will also require significant traffic management to accommodate the construction vehicles required to carry out this work.

This challenge is not only limited to the design stage, but more so for the construction stage with heavy machinery required on site. Furthermore, the addition of a 1.5m wide footpath means that all residential driveways need to be reconstructed to a shorter length and at a steeper grade. It is noted that most of these driveways are already steep with supporting retaining walls. As a result, approximately 110m of additional retaining walls are required to realign driveways.

#### **1.4 Vegetation**

A vegetation assessment has been carried out by Council's arborist. Of the vegetation that was noted, the *Kunzea Ericoides* (White tea-tree) and *Acacia Melanoxylon* (Australian Blackwood) were the two main plants that were established and worth retaining (located outside 1393 Mountain Hwy).

Where possible, the other trees that have been identified with medium retention value will be retained. However, this can only be confirmed once the detailed design process is completed.



**Figure 3 – *Kunzea Ericoides* (White tea-tree)**





**Figure 4 – *Acacia Melanoxylon* (Australian Blackwood)**

A set of five *Cyanthea Australis* ferns identified outside 1421 Mountain Hwy will require removal. As these ferns are identified as having high retention value and are in good condition, it is proposed that they are relocated into a local bushland reserve.



**Figure 5 – *Cyanthea Australis* ferns**

An assessment of the vegetation removal and any replanting would form part of the detailed design.

### **1.5 Impacts to Private Properties**

To allow for the construction of the footpath, 22 properties along the alignment will be affected by one or more of the following:

- Potentially increasing the steepness of the crossover/driveway.
- Potential removal of vegetation planted by the residents both in the road reserve and private property.
- Removal of structures built by residents within the road reserve.
- Reconstruction of vehicle crossover/driveways.
- Construction or reconstruction of retaining walls within private property; or
- Not being able to park on their properties while driveway/retaining wall construction is underway.

Landowner consent is required to carry out the driveway modifications and retaining walls within their private property. If permission to regrade or alter the private property is not granted, Council would need to seek an alternative option, or the footpath would need to be redesigned to be non-standard with a steeper cross fall or narrower width. Although not all 22 affected properties along Mountain Highway responded to our engagement, those that did, have not raised objection to potential works on their property. However, they wanted to be consulted further about the alterations. Once greater detail of alterations to driveways is available, one-on-one engagement with owners is planned.

## **2. ENGAGEMENT**

In August 2023, 240 households along Mountain Highway and within the Claremont Avenue catchment were consulted via letter drop about extending the existing footpath beyond Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue. The proposal about staging this section of footpath was also part of the consultation. Residents were informed of the project, potential impacts to their property (if any), the estimated project cost and an enclosed survey where they could indicate their preference for Council to construct:

- No footpath.
- Only Stage 2a of the footpath link; (Wicks walkway to Claremont walk through).
- Both Stage 2a and 2b of the footpath link. (Wicks walkway to Claremont/Mountain Hwy).

A total of 86 households responded to the survey (37% response rate). Out of all the responses received:

- 3% of respondents indicated their support for no footpath (3 households).
- 21% of respondents support only Stage 2a (19 households).
- 76% of respondents indicated their support for both stage 2a and 2b (65 households).

Comments received frequently indicated the construction of the footpath was long awaited, would improve safety and allow safer access to the local bus stops and The Basin shops. Those respondents not supporting the footpath construction were concerned about the cost of construction and that the use of concrete would increase the amount of impervious surfaces within the area.

Overall as the project is complex and involves a number of properties that will be directly affected, it is expected that the project will require extensive community consultation throughout all phases of the project to appropriately manage expectations and keep residents informed. This will likely add significant challenges to the programming of the project with the need to access multiple private properties to deliver the path outcome.

Noting the above requirements, it is likely that delivery of the project, if funded by Council, would not occur before 2027/28.

### **3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Apart from the existing Claremont Avenue walkway, the construction of the Mountain Hwy footpath will be the only other available footpath link within the Claremont Avenue catchment. Overall, the footpath would improve access to active and public transport options, provide a safer walking facility for parents with prams and our ageing community and improve quality of life.

Based on current census data, The Basin community profile is shifting with a large portion of residents entering retirement and senior age groups or being replaced by young families. To put this in perspective, between the two censuses conducted in 2016 and 2021, of the 4500 residents, over 140 residents transitioned into a senior age group (70 – 85 and 85+), excluding the 400 residents already at this age group and those that have transitioned since the last census.

The almost unanimously positive feedback from the community about this project, is a good indication of the value it would provide to the 240 properties in this area with many responses indicating that an accessible path to the local shops is considered a basic infrastructure provision to support daily living.

### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS**

The subject of this report has been considered in the context of climate change and its relevance to the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031. The construction of a footpath along Mountain Hwy would positively impact on Council's net zero target by increasing opportunities for active transport, making it a more competitive choice than private vehicle trips to the local shops.

This will also improve access to public transport, making it a more feasible option for residents to utilise.

Construction of the footpath will require the removal of existing vegetation which minimally impacts the current level of canopy within the area as advised by Council's arborist. Additional planting could be carried out as part of the project to offset or improve canopy within the area. Any plantings will be carried out and maintained through the establishment phase by our Parks Team.

Based on the preliminary design, the path is proposed to be constructed in concrete, which in general observations increases climate change by creating an urban heat island effect. However, as the site is within a highly vegetated area with significant canopy cover, the negative impacts of the path would be minor in comparison to the overall social and environmental impact achieved.

Although the use of concrete will increase the impervious surfaces within the area, alternative materials are unsuitable for this project as steep crushed rock slopes are not easily compacted.

Plus, they will slowly erode, creating unwanted run-off especially during wet weather days. Maintaining a crushed rock surface in this location is also expensive due to the extent of traffic management required to complete such work safely.

## 5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Mountain Hwy is highly vegetated area. As discussed above, a vegetation assessment was undertaken as part of the preliminary design. No major negative environmental impacts are observed as proposed vegetation to be affected or removed has low retention value. Nevertheless, the footpath will be aligned to minimise the need for vegetation removal.

## 6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 Estimated project cost

Officers have completed preliminary civil design for the footpath and associated driveways & driveway retaining walls and propose to adopt a suspended slab footpath design. To progress the design, it is critical to obtain a geotechnical investigation report on the existing embankment condition, as well as underground services, which will guide footing and structural design.

The estimated cost of extending this footpath project to Claremont Avenue is significant with an estimated cost of \$250,000 to complete the investigation and design (funded in the 24/25 budget) and an indicative cost estimate of \$1.5mil to deliver the project. An itemised cost estimate is set out in the following table. Should Council support progress for the project, the balance of the budget allocated for the design of the path would be utilised in the 25/26 year to enable completion of the design process.

Design Items	Estimate
Service locating	\$50,000
Geotechnical investigation	\$100,000
Structural Design	\$40,000
Civil Design	\$10,000
Contingency	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>
Construction Items	Estimate
Traffic management	\$320,000
Demolition, Grubbing & Clearing	\$80,000
Path and driveway works (Concrete, Reinforced concrete, Asphalt & Gravel - 1500m <sup>2</sup> )	\$200,000
Pilling and Foundation works – 400m	\$500,000
Retaining wall works – 100m	\$150,000
Miscellaneous & Contingency	\$250,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>

**Table 1 – Mountain Hwy Path - Design and Construction Cost Estimate – Wicks Reserve to Claremont Avenue**

## **6.2 Possible project staging**

Due to the cost of the project, it is suggested that the project be staged as follows:

- Year 1 - Stage 2a Construction (\$700,000) (Wicks walkway to Claremont walk through).
- Year 2 - Stage 2b Construction (\$800,000) (Claremont walk through to Claremont/Mountain Hwy).

There is currently no funding in the Capital Works Program for construction of this project. Staging the construction will allow the utilisation of multiple financial year budgets for construction of each stage across financial years and engaging a contractor to deliver each stage. Additionally, the cost to Council each year would maintain funding alignment with typical funding allocations towards new footpaths.

## **6.3 Impact on overall Footpath Program**

The most obvious funding source for this project is Capital Works Program Number 4006 – New Footpath Program. The disadvantage of using that funding source is that, unless external grant funding is obtained or additional project specific funding is provided, the scale of the proposed project would likely consume available funding for other footpath priorities across a 3 year period.

Although the New Footpath Capital Works Program is subject to review each year, the current indicative projects earmarked for 2027/28 – 2029/30 and likely to be postponed if the Mountain Highway extension was funded are:

- Mountain Highway, Wantirna under Eastlink (Collier Ward)
- Highmoor Avenue, near Myrtle Street, Bayswater (Dinsdale Ward)
- Dorset Road, missing link, south of Mountain Highway, Boronia (Baird Ward)
- Lewis Road, missing link from Wadhurst Drive to Arthur Street, Wantirna (Dinsdale Ward)
- Dorset Road, missing link south of London Drive, Bayswater (Baird Ward)
- Forest Road, between Nyora Avenue and Wright Street, The Basin (Chandler Ward)
- Forest Road, north of Hunter Street, Boronia (Dobson Ward)
- Parker Avenue, off Hastings Avenue, Boronia (Chandler Ward)
- Forest Road, between Wright Street and Harrison Street, The Basin (Chandler Ward)
- Amay Crescent, full length, Ferntree Gully (Friberg Ward)

It should be noted that all the above projects rank equal or lower priority than the subject Mountain Highway project.

At present, there are no specific external State or Federal funding Programs available to nominate the Mountain Highway footpath project for funding consideration. Alternatively, it may be worthwhile to advocate to State and Federal MPs for consideration of funding this project as a special case. This project has some distinctive elements to it, that might make it attractive. Namely:

- High community interest
- Landmark project
- Pedestrian safety benefits



- Challenging locality
- Within a State managed road reserve

#### **6.4 Options for Proceeding with the Mountain Highway Footpath Project**

This section outlines the options available to Council regarding the proposed footpath connection in Mountain Highway, between Wicks Road and Claremont Avenue, The Basin, building upon the previous discussions regarding design complexities, financial implications, and community feedback. These options aim to guide Council's decision-making for the next steps of this project.

##### **Option 1 (The Recommended option): Continue the Design Work and refer to project for funding in the future Capital Works Program (Approx. 2027/28 - 2029/30)**

This option accepts the project as a high-priority footpath, continuing the design work, and plans for its funding and delivery within the forward footpath program, with construction likely staged over multiple financial years.

- **Project Prioritisation and Timeline:** This project could be accepted as a high priority footpath and funded within the forward footpath program, with an approximate delivery timeframe of 2027/28. It is noted that delivery, if funded, would not occur before this period. The timeline for the funding is positioned as 2027/28 due needing to have the third party approvals in place before construction funding is allocated. The third party approvals would include DTP and private property owners.
- **Staged Construction:** Due to the high cost, it is suggested that the project be staged over two years:
  - Year 1 (Stage 2a): Construction from Wicks walkway to Claremont walk-through, estimated at \$700,000.
  - Year 2 (Stage 2b): Construction from Claremont walk-through to Claremont/Mountain Highway, estimated at \$800,000.
  - Staging would allow the utilization of multiple financial year budgets and the engagement of a contractor for each stage.
- **Financial Implications and Impact on Other Projects:** While staging maintains funding alignment with previously identified allocations for new footpaths, the scale of this project would likely consume available funding for other footpath priorities across a 3-year period unless external grant funding or additional project-specific funding is sourced. Specific projects that may be postponed include several missing links on Mountain Highway, Highmoor Avenue, Dorset Road, Lewis Road, Forest Road, Parker Avenue, and Amay Crescent.
- **Social Benefits and Community Support:** The project has high community interest, with 76% of surveyed households supporting both Stage 2a and 2b. Comments frequently indicated the footpath was "long awaited" and would "improve safety" and allow safer access to local bus stops and The Basin shops. The footpath would provide safe pedestrian access for an additional 250-300 households along Mountain Highway, the Claremont Avenue catchment, and off Toorak Avenue on the high side of Mountain Highway. It would improve access to active and public transport options, provide a safer walking facility for parents with prams

and the ageing community, and improve quality of life, supporting independent ageing in place and active living for The Basin's shifting demographic.

- **Construction Challenges:** Construction would entail significant challenges due to terrain complexity and traffic management risks. Mountain Highway would likely be reduced to a one-lane road for approximately three to four weeks during the site survey period and four to six months during the construction phase, primarily between 9 am and 3 pm on weekdays, affecting access for motorists.
- **External Funding Opportunities:** While no specific State or Federal funding programs are currently available, the project's distinctive elements—high community interest, landmark potential, pedestrian safety benefits, challenging locality, and location within a State-managed road reserve—could make it attractive for advocacy to State and Federal MPs for special case funding.

**Option 2: Continue with the Detailed Design Work, as per the Original Council Resolution, and Present a Further Report for Construction Decision**

This option involves completing the detailed design and survey process, as per the Council's resolution on 23 October 2023, with a subsequent report to Council to consider construction options.

- **Original Resolution and Current Status:** The Council's resolution included supporting the investigation of the full extent of the proposed footpath through a detailed design and survey process and referring the estimated design cost to the Capital Works Program. This report serves as an update regarding the resolution to receive a further report to consider construction options, subject to funding the detailed design.
- **Design Funding:** An additional budget of \$300,000 was allocated towards the detailed design in the 24/25 budget. The estimated cost to complete the design is \$250,000. If supported, the balance of the budget would be carried forward into the 25/26 year.
- **Challenges in Design Phase:**
  - **Geotechnical Investigations and Underground Service Locating:** These are critical for guiding footing and structural design but have proven difficult, with an appointed consultant failing to complete the tasks due to natural terrain prohibiting access for contractors. Internal considerations are underway to engage a higher-tier geotechnical consultant, which will require significant traffic management.
  - **Landowner Engagement:** Landowner consent is required for works on private property. While initial respondents desired further consultation rather than raising objections, the project is complex and will require extensive community consultation throughout all phases to manage expectations and keep residents informed.

**Option 3: Continue with the Detailed Design Work and Only Deliver Stage 2a of the Project**

This option involves completing the detailed design and survey process, as per the original Council resolution, but with a firm decision to only proceed with the construction of Stage 2a of the footpath link (Wicks walkway to Claremont walk-through).



- **Rationale:** This approach aims to reduce the overall project scope and immediate construction cost while still providing a new section of footpath.
- **Current Status and Design Funding:** The Council's resolution supported investigating the full extent of the footpath through a detailed design and survey process, for which an additional \$300,000 was allocated in the 24/25 budget. The estimated cost to complete the design is \$250,000. This option would still require the completion of this detailed design work.
- **Estimated Construction Cost:** The estimated construction cost for Stage 2a alone is \$700,000. This is significantly less than the estimated \$1.5 million for the full project.
- **Community Support:** While the majority of surveyed households (76%) supported the construction of both Stage 2a and 2b, 21% of respondents specifically indicated their support for only Stage 2a.
- **Impact on Future Stages:** A critical consideration for this option is that if only Stage 2a is pursued, it is highly unlikely that any future stage (Stage 2b) would be delivered. The incomplete link (without Stage 2a) would likely rank even lower in future project prioritisation, meaning the final stage would probably not be completed within at least the next 10 years, partly because it would no longer include the direct connection to Fernbrook School.
- **Design and Construction Challenges (Applicable to Stage 2a):** Many of the complex delivery challenges identified for the full project would still apply to Stage 2a. These include:
  - Project design complexity associated with the terrain, requiring a structurally sound support footed in the embankment.
  - Difficulties with geotechnical investigations and underground service locating due to natural terrain prohibiting access for contractors.
  - Requirement to reconstruct residential driveways to a shorter length and steeper grade, potentially needing additional retaining walls.
  - Need for landowner consent for works on private property, which could be challenging despite initial survey responses.
  - Significant traffic management and control during both design investigation and construction, as Mountain Highway is an arterial road managed by the Department of Transport and Planning, typically restricting work to 9 am-3 pm, which prolongs the program.
- **Financial Implications:** While the direct construction cost is reduced, proceeding with Stage 2a would still consume a substantial portion of the available funding for new footpaths. Unless external grant funding or additional project-specific funding is secured, this project would likely impact and postpone other footpath priorities within the Capital Works Program.
- **Social Benefits:** Delivering Stage 2a would provide improved safe pedestrian access for residents within that immediate section of Mountain Highway and to the Claremont Avenue walkway. However, it would not fully realise the comprehensive pedestrian connection benefits for the entire 250 households along Mountain Highway and the Claremont Avenue catchment that a complete Stage 2a and 2b would offer. Similarly, residents of Toorak

Avenue catchment, on the high side of Mountain Highway, would not benefit from Stage 2b because Toorak Avenue is opposite Claremont Avenue. The full access to all three local bus stops and The Basin local shops might remain partially compromised for some residents further along the highway.

#### **Option 4: Defer the Project Beyond a Five-Year Horizon**

This option involves postponing the Mountain Highway Footpath Project for a period exceeding five years.

- **Rationale:** This option recognises that if this project were considered with a benefit:cost lens, its ranking would be quite lower. This project is 10 times the cost of a typical urban footpath project. However, it's benefit:cost ratio would not be as simple as 10% of its ranking points because it has other benefits such as safety improvements, health benefits from facilitating active travel, and better connectivity. Choosing this option would mean that the project is not funded or pursued within the upcoming five-year Capital Works Program. This approach effectively allows Council to allocate resources and funding to other footpath priorities or other capital works initiatives that may be deemed more urgent or have higher benefit-cost ratios in the short to medium term.
- **Financial Implications:** Deferring this project would free up the significant funding that would otherwise be required. The estimated cost to complete the design work is \$250,000 (already funded in the 24/25 budget) and the indicative construction cost for the full project is \$1.5 million. By deferring, these funds could be redirected, potentially allowing other projects listed in the New Footpath Capital Works Program (e.g., Mountain Highway under Eastlink, Highmoor Avenue, Dorset Road, Lewis Road, Forest Road, Parker Avenue, Amay Crescent) to proceed without postponement.
- **Community Expectation and Reputational Risk:** A significant risk associated with this option is the potential for negative community feedback and reputational damage for Council. The consultation process for this project has already generated an expectation among community members that the footpath will eventually be constructed. A prolonged delay or indefinite deferral could lead to disappointment, particularly given the strong community support observed in the surveys, where 76% of respondents indicated support for both stages 2a and 2b, and comments frequently highlighted the project as "long awaited" and crucial for improving safety and access.
- **Likelihood of Future Completion:** If the project is deferred beyond a five-year horizon, especially if considered in stages, the likelihood of its full completion (including Stage 2b) may significantly decrease. The report notes that if the project were separated into stages, the incomplete link (without the direct connection to Fernbrook School) would likely rank even lower in future project prioritisation, potentially meaning the final stage would not be completed within at least the next 10 years.
- **Project Challenges Remain:** While deferral avoids immediate financial outlay and complex delivery challenges, it does not resolve the inherent difficulties of the project, such as design complexity due to terrain, challenges with geotechnical investigations, the need for private land access and landowner consent, and significant traffic management requirements. These

challenges would still need to be addressed if the project were to be revisited in the distant future.

### **Option 5: Not Funding the Project**

This option entails ceasing the current design work and not proceeding with the proposed footpath project.

- **Rationale:** This approach also acknowledges the project's benefit:cost ratio is considerably lower than an equivalent footpath in an urban area, being 8 to 10 times more expensive despite serving approximately 240 properties.
- **Estimated Costs and Funding Status:** An estimated \$250,000 is required to complete the detailed design, which has been funded in the 24/25 budget. The indicative construction cost is a significant \$1.5 million. Stopping now would prevent further expenditure beyond what has already been committed for design.
- **Key Delivery Challenges Influencing Cost:**
  - Project design complexity associated with the challenging terrain. The narrow verge, steep embankments, and need for a 520m structurally sound support require complex solutions.
  - Provision of access to properties and the requirement to reconstruct approximately 110m of additional retaining walls due to the steepness of existing driveways.
  - Requirement to build on private land, necessitating landowner consent for driveway modifications and retaining wall works on 22 affected properties. Negotiating outcomes with potential strenuous objections could be challenging.
  - Traffic management and control during both the design investigation and construction phases. Mountain Highway is an arterial road managed by the Department of Transport and Planning, requiring a Memorandum of Authority for all traffic management, typically restricting work to 9 am-3 pm, which prolongs the construction program.
  - **Reputational Risk:** There is a risk of negative community feedback if the project is not funded or significantly delayed, as consultation has created an expectation that it will eventually proceed.

## **7. RISKS**

The anticipated risks associated with this report include:

- The cost of the project may increase due to technical complexities and additional requirements imposed by the Department of Transport, which may necessitate design changes, extended timelines, or more specialised construction methods.
- The benefit-cost ratio of the project is much lower than an equivalent footpath in an urban area. Although this is a worthy project serving approximately 240 properties, it is 8 – 10 times more expensive.
- Impact on other Footpath Program priorities if we do fund this project. Given the high cost of this project, if we rely on the existing target budget in the New Footpath Program, other footpath projects with a similar high priority, will be delayed.

- Reputational risk if we do not fund the project. The consultation about this project has created an expectation in the community that it will eventually happen. If it is not funded or delayed for a significant time, the feedback is likely to be negative.
- Obtaining landowner consent for driveway realignment and retaining wall works on private property is a risk. This will be managed by early and detailed consultation with the affected residents. Affected residents have already been provided with a basic indication of how their property might be affected. Further consultation will occur as the project is developed. In many cases, it is likely that the works will improve access to properties.

## **8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029**

### **Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources**

Strategy 1.1 - A variety of transport options is available through the effective planning, advocacy and management of efficient, active, sustainable and accessible transport modes, particularly in growth locations.

### **Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity**

Strategy 2.1 - Our community's diverse needs are addressed by ensuring equity and inclusion are considered in decision making and strategic planning.

Strategy 2.4 - There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

### **Leading, listening and governing responsibly**

Strategy 4.5 - Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

### **Being a strong voice for safety**

Strategy 5.3 - Our community is more secure, connected and feel less isolated through planning, partnerships, advocacy and targeted support for our most vulnerable.

### **Planning our future city**

Strategy 6.3 - Our evolving neighbourhoods are liveable and sustainable through planning and design that responds to population growth and our community's changing needs.

## **9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY**

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 9      Supplementary Items

## 10 Notices Of Motion

### 10.1 Notice of Motion No. 183 - Improving Pedestrian Safety Near Hatter and Hare Café, Bayswater

The following notice of motion was lodged by Councillor Williams in accordance with Council's Governance Rules:

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting on 25 August 2025:

That:

1. Council notes that Scoresby Road is an Arterial Road under the management of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), which is the responsible Road Authority for pedestrian safety measures including formal crossings and traffic signals; and
2. The Mayor writes to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Melissa Horne MP, the Member for Bayswater, Jackson Taylor MP and the Secretary, Department of Transport and Planning, Jeroen Weimar to:
  - a. Acknowledge Council's ongoing concern regarding pedestrian safety near the Hatter and Hare Café on Scoresby Road in Bayswater;
  - b. Request that DTP give urgent consideration to the installation of a formal pedestrian crossing at this location;
  - c. Seek confirmation of the timeline for DTP's future assessment and funding consideration of this site; and
  - d. Request that DTP consider interim safety improvements, including enhanced signage or temporary measures to improve visibility and awareness.

11 Urgent Business

12 Questions Through the Chair

13 Confidential Items