AGENDA

Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 26 October 2026 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 September 2026.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

5 Reports By Councillors

6 Planning Matters

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 September 2026 to 30 September 2026

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, Jonathan McNally

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 from 1 September 2026 to 30 September 2026 as set out in the officers' report.

1. REPORT
Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 1 September 2026 to 30 September 2026 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type		**No.**
Building & Works:	Residential	3
	Other	2
Subdivision		6
Units		11
Tree Removal / Pruning		14
Single Dwelling		1
Signage		2
Change of Use		1
TOTAL		**40**

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 September 2026 and 30 September 2026

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2026/6345	12 Fuchsia Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus leucoxylon (Yellow Gum) and five (5) Pittosporum undulatum (Sweet Pittosporum).	07/09/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6446	17 Gabrielle Court FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Corymbia citriodora (Lemon Scented Gum), one (1) Grevillea robusta (Silky Oak) and one (1) Acer negundo (Box Elder)	16/09/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6360	228 Boronia Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus botryoides (Southern Mahogany)	18/09/2026 Refused
Baird	2026/6417	1-4/8 Malvern Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Subdivision of land into 4 Lots (existing Warehouses)	07/09/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6410	13 Vivienne Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Three (3) lot subdivision (approved unit development)	04/09/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6174	20 Meagher Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of three double storey dwellings	10/09/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6147	3 Duncan Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings to the rear of the existing dwelling	09/09/2026 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2026/6379	3 Indigo Place BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of one (1) single storey dwelling	03/09/2026 Approved
Chandler	2026/9118	58 Miller Road THE BASIN VIC 3154	Removal of one (1) Grevillea robusta (Silky Oak)	29/09/2026 Approved
Chandler	2025/6613	1368 Mountain Highway THE BASIN VIC 3154	Alterations and additions to dwelling, new double garage and alterations to bungalow and convert to Small Second Dwelling	24/09/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6343	9 Waldheim Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Use and development of the land for a warehouse and a reduction in the car parking requirements	28/09/2026 Notice of Decision
Collier	2026/6419	15 Tanderra Crescent WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) Fraxinus angustifolia (Desert Ash)	08/09/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6162	21 Yorkminster Avenue WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Construction of three (3) double-storey dwellings and vegetation removal	09/09/2026 Notice of Decision

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dinsdale	2026/6370	42 Kumala Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of four (4) double storey dwellings on the land and removal of vegetation	15/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9121	7 Enfield Drive BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Two lot subdivision (approved unit development)	23/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6348	13 Huxley Court BAYSWATER VIC 3153	The construction of four (4) double storey dwellings	28/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6139	5 Banksia Court and 23 Myrtle Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of fifteen (15) double storey dwellings and the removal of canopy trees	18/09/2026 Notice of Decision
Dinsdale	2026/6434	Knox Ozone (MASTER) 509 Burwood Highway WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Installation of signage	01/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6283	29 Margaret Avenue BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of a dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling and a Two-Lot Subdivision	11/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2025/6589	4 Lilac Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of the land for a double storey dwelling to the side of an existing dwelling and a two (2) lot subdivision	22/09/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9116	18 Dinsdale Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Two Lot Subdivision (approved unit development)	24/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6293	131 Station Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Use of the land for an indoor recreation facility (Personal Training Studio)	09/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6424	13 Barton Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Extension to existing dwelling and the construction of a shed to rear of the site	09/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6462	1183 Burwood Highway UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and works in a Heritage Overlay associated with the train station	01/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6463	53-55 Kia-Ora Parade FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Cedrus deodara (Himalayan Cedar)	16/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6447	163 Underwood Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two lot subdivision (existing dwellings)	28/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/9113	48 McIver Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Photinia × fraseri (Photinia cultivar)	15/09/2026 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dobson	2026/6423	20 Mason Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of two Southern Mahogany Gums	29/09/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6464	65 Ferndale Road UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of two (2) Eucalyptus goniocalyx (Long Leaved Box)	21/09/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/9099	13 O'Connor Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Construct a second dwelling on a lot	24/09/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/6472	53 Balladonia Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Removal of one (1) Pyrus calleryana (Callery Pear)	30/09/2026 Approved
Scott	2025/6621	384 Scoresby Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Development of double storey dwelling at the rear of existing dwelling	18/09/2026 Approved
Scott	2026/6467	1 Findon Court WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) Leptospermum petersonii (Lemon scented Tea tree)	29/09/2026 Approved
Taylor	2026/6397	12 Airlie Court ROWVILLE VIC 3178	The Removal of fifteen (15) Cupressus × leylandii (Leyland cypress)	03/09/2026 Approved
Tirhatuan	2026/9027	1/4 De Wint Court SCORESBY VIC 3179	Additions and alterations to existing dwelling	3/09/2026 Refused
Tirhatuan	2026/6228	9/1488 Ferntree Gully Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Construction and display of promotion and major promotion, high wall signage	4/09/2026 Notice of Decision
Tirhatuan	2026/6170	712 Stud Road SCORESBY VIC 3179	Development of six triple storey dwellings, creation of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2, and removal of vegetation	02/09/2026 Notice of Decision
Tirhatuan	2026/9110	27 Glenifer Avenue SCORESBY VIC 3179	Two lot Subdivision (vacant land)	18/09/2026 Refused
Tirhatuan	2026/6407	34 Vinen Road SCORESBY VIC 3179	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus nicholii (Narrow leaved Black Peppermint)	08/09/2026 Approved
Tirhatuan	2026/6438	77 Borg Crescent SCORESBY VIC 3179	Removal of one (1) Corymbia ficifolia (Flowering Gum) and two (2) Cupressus × leylandii (Leyland Cypress)	16/09/2026 Approved

6.2 Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Senior Strategic Planner, Rachel Dafnomilis
Manager: Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan
Executive: Director City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

SUMMARY
The purpose of this report is to advise Council on the Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026 and its recommendations contained in **Attachment 1** (the Review). Background information that informed the Review is contained in the Background Report provided at **Attachment 2**.

Council is required to carry out a review of the Knox Planning Scheme under Section 12B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. A review of the planning scheme is required every 4 years following the completion of a new Council Plan. The purpose of the review is to evaluate the performance of the Knox Planning Scheme and identify opportunities for improvements.

Methodology
The State Government has set the agenda for the review of all planning schemes in Victoria through Planning Scheme Reviews, Advisory Note, March 2026 (Advisory Note) which identifies issues to be addressed (**Attachment 3**). These issues include identifying inconsistencies between local and State planning policies, evaluating the application of residential zones, reviewing neighbourhood character policies to plan for housing growth, and identifying where mapping for environmental hazards should be updated.

Planning Scheme Review 2023
Since the previous planning scheme review in 2023, Council has achieved some significant milestones including the completion of the Planning Policy Framework translation, the implementation of the planning framework for the Boral Quarry redevelopment, finalisation of the Wantirna Health Precinct West Development Plan and the adoption and implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy 2021.

A review of the recommendations from the previous Planning Scheme Review in 2023, has found the following:

- 13 recommendations have been completed
- 13 recommendations are underway
- 3 recommendations are no longer required
- 2 recommendations are on hold
- 2 recommendations are outstanding
- 3 recommendations are ongoing
- 1 recommendation is to be rescoped.

The recommendations which have not been completed, will be form part of the recommendations for the Planning Scheme Review 2026.

Council is progressing other projects arising from the Planning Scheme Review 2023 including:

- Implementation of the Bayswater Renewal Strategy through Amendment C204knox
- Updating of the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 2 through Amendment C196knox
- Progressing the review of the Knox Housing Strategy and advancing the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan
- Working with Melbourne Water to advance updates to flood modelling
- Scoping of future projects including the Knox Land for Business Review

Findings and Recommendations

The review found that the Knox Planning Scheme is operating effectively. However, there are opportunities to modernise the Knox Planning Scheme in response to the State Government planning policy reforms.

The fifteen recommendations are prioritised as high (8), medium (4) or low (3). Work has commenced on approximately half of the recommendations. Recommendations identified as high priority include:

- Preparing a new Knox Housing Strategy that provides for a range of housing opportunities across the municipality to meet the 2051 housing target, informed by the Housing Capacity and Assessment Platform (HCAP)
- Continue to collaborate with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to progress the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan
- Complete Amendment C204knox to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme
- Undertake a detailed assessment for landslide and debris flow susceptibility in Knox and commence a planning scheme amendment to introduce the Erosion Management Overlay for affected areas
- Continue partnering with Melbourne Water to implement updated flood maps and planning controls in the Knox Planning Scheme
- Continue to progress Amendment C196knox to correct entries and mapping in the Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 2
- Undertake further work to increase vegetation protection on private land
- Undertake administrative planning scheme amendments as recommended by the Planning Scheme Audit

In addition to the identified recommendations, there is likely to be requests for proponent led planning scheme amendments, and further work in responding to State Government planning reforms, including the updates to the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Next Steps

Following Council's endorsement of the Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026, a copy of the report will be forwarded to the Minister for Planning in accordance with Section 12B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The Advisory Note states requirements of all planning scheme reviews, including the requirement that a report be provided to the Minister for Planning by 31 October 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026 in accordance with Attachments 1 and 2.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Office or such person as nominated by the Chief Executive Officer:
    a) to make minor administrative changes as deemed necessary; and
    b) to submit the Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026 to the Minister for Planning in accordance with section 12B(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

1. DISCUSSION

The Knox Planning Scheme provides the framework for achieving Council's land use and development objectives and decision making for planning permit applications. It is important that the Knox Planning Scheme remains accurate and up to date to ensure effective strategic planning and decision making.

Methodology

The review provides an overview of the performance of the Knox Planning Scheme since its last review in 2023 and in context of State Government planning reform over the past 2 years. The review report is provided at Attachment 1. The State Government has released the Planning Scheme Reviews, Advisory Note, March 2026 (Advisory Note) which identifies issues to be addressed. The advisory note is provided at Attachment 3.

The review has been informed by extensive research and internal consultation, including:

- Analysis of demographic data and trends
- Consideration of the 2025 Housing Monitoring Report (Knox City Council)
- Review of actions arising from the Planning Scheme Review 2023
- Analysis of planning permit activity
- A review of State and local planning policies and strategies developed since the previous planning scheme review
- A review of Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decisions and reports by Planning Panels Victoria
- Consideration of consultation undertaken as part of strategic planning projects
- An audit of local planning provisions including schedules to zones, overlays, particular provisions and general provisions

Public consultation is not required to be undertaken as part of this project. Internal consultation has been undertaken on the review with the following teams:

- Statutory Planning
- Biodiversity
- Economic Development
- Social Policy and Wellbeing
- Traffic and Transport
- City Projects - Knox Central
- Communications

The review identifies potential changes to the Knox Planning Scheme to resolve conflicts between State and local policies, address policy gaps and improve decision-making for planning permit applications. While the review recommends future strategic planning work, this work will be subject to further scoping, budget bids and resource allocation through the Strategic Planning Work Program.

Planning Permit Activity
Council received 787 planning permit applications in 2023, 822 applications in 2024 and 850 applications in 2025. Planning permits issued over this time period have approved over 1,500 new dwellings.

Multi dwelling and subdivisions account for the greatest number of applications. Council received 130 multi-dwelling applications in 2025 and 171 in 2024. Native vegetation removal also generated a significant number of applications, with Council receiving 129 applications in 2025 and 121 in 2024.

VCAT decisions steadily declined between 2023 and 2025. Most VCAT appeals relate to multi-dwelling applications. The decline in VCAT appeals has been an outcome sought through improvements in decision-making processes and negotiation with applicants.

State Government led Strategic Initiatives
Since the last planning scheme review, there has been ten significant State Government planning reforms including:

- Implementation of Plan for Victoria (released 2025)
- Expansion of the Development Facilitation Program
- Introduction of small second dwelling provisions
- Introduction of the Housing Choice and Transport Zone, Built Form Overlay and Precinct Zone
- Introduction of the townhouse and low rise code into planning schemes
- Establishment of the Great design fast track initiatives
- Introduction of the mid rise code into planning schemes
- Introduction of the canopy tree reforms
- Parking provision reforms
- Bushfire planning reforms

Further changes as part of the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026 are likely to be introduced in 2026 and 2027. Council will be required to continue to review and respond to the impact of the amended Act on the Knox Planning Scheme.

Local Strategic Initiatives
Since the last planning scheme review in 2023, Council has adopted several strategies which have implications for the Knox Planning Scheme. These include:

- Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029
- Green Areas and Rural Strategy 2023
- Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024
- Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034

There have been 12 local amendments to the Knox Planning Scheme since the previous planning scheme review. In addition to State led initiatives, notable local amendments include:

- C185knox - Wantirna Health Precinct West Development Plan
- C191knox - Planning Policy Framework translation
- C192knox - Boronia Renewal Strategy 2024
- C184knox - Former Norvel Quarry redevelopment
- C194knox - Boral Quarry redevelopment

Issues and Recommendations

The review considers issues in the Knox Planning Scheme and makes recommendations under the following key themes:

- Residential development;
- Economic development;
- Rural and environmental; and
- Other issues including Transport, Heritage, Open Space and Administration.

Proposed Strategic Planning Work Program (underway/commence in next 4 years)

The report provided in Attachment 1 includes planning background and context since Council's last Planning Scheme Review in 2023. The 'Findings' section of the report (Attachment 1, page 33) and Table 1 below provide the substantive findings of the current PSR and will inform the future strategic planning work program to be progressed/commenced over the next four years.

Knox Planning Scheme Audit

Appendix 1 of Attachment 1 provides an audit of the clauses and controls within the Knox Planning Scheme and identifies where there is consistency, policy neutral changes or further strategic work is required to align State and local planning policy content.

Table 1. Recommendations, priorities and existing budget allocation arising from this Review

Residential	Priority	Budget
1. Prepare a new Knox Housing Strategy which: a) Provides a range of housing opportunities across the municipality to meet the 2051 housing target, informed by HCAP. b) Identify areas for substantial change with good access to jobs, public transport and community facilities, as well as areas for incremental and minimal change where environmental constraints and landscape significance apply. c) Explore options to support greater housing diversity in Knox. d) Review existing neighbourhood character policies in the local planning policy framework. e) Investigate opportunities to improve environmentally sustainable development outcomes in residential development.	High	Existing Budget

f) Review strategic investigation sites currently identified in the Knox Planning Scheme. g) Investigate models for an Infrastructure Contribution Plan system to support a growing population. h) Consider the findings of the review of the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027.		
Economic Development	**Priority**	**Budget**
2. Continue to collaborate with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to progress the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan.	High	Existing Budget
3. Progress the review of the Land for Business Strategy and industrial policy in the Knox Planning Scheme to inform an evaluation of the zones and overlays on business centres.	Medium	To be funded through operating budget
4. Prepare an Activity Centres Strategy to identify the role and function of each activity centre and confirm classifications in accordance with Plan for Victoria and prioritise future strategic work.	Medium	To be funded through operating budget
5. Continue progressing strategic work to support a planning scheme amendment for the rezoning of the Knox Central Precinct, 'Heart of Knox'.	Medium	Existing Budget
6. Complete Amendment C204knox to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	Existing Budget
Environmental and Rural	**Priority**	**Budget**
7. Undertake a detailed assessment for landslide and debris flow susceptibility in Knox and a planning scheme amendment to introduce the Erosion Management Overlay for affected areas.	High	Existing Budget
8. Continue partnering with Melbourne Water to implement updated flood maps and planning controls in the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	To be funded through operating budget
9. Continue to progress Amendment C196knox to fix anomalies in the Vegetation Protection Overlay 2.	High	Existing Budget
10. Undertake further work to increase vegetation protection on private land.	High	Existing Budget

11. Undertake a planning scheme amendment to implement the findings of the Sites of Biological Significance Study, Volumes 1 and 2, 3rd edition to update the Environmental Significance Overlay.	Medium	Can be funded through operating budget
12. Undertake further work to better protect productive agricultural land in the Knox Planning Scheme.	Low	Not yet funded
13. Investigate the ongoing viability of rural residential areas and identify any development opportunities that would not adversely affect their rural and landscape character.	Low	Not yet funded
14. Investigate the potential rezoning of 33–35 Napoleon Road, Lysterfield to fix anomalies in the zoning of the land.	Low	To be funded through operating budget
Administrative Changes	**Priority**	**Budget**
15. Undertake administrative planning scheme amendments as recommended by the Planning Scheme Audit.	High	Existing Budget

- high-priority tasks commence within the next 1–2 years
- medium-priority tasks commence within the next 2–3 years
- low-priority tasks commence within the next 4 years

The issues are discussed below.

Residential Development

Planning policy for residential development has undergone significant reform over the past two years. Overall, the State Government planning reforms reduce council discretion in decision-making, expand alternative approval pathways through the Development Facilitation Program including the use of Standing Advisory Committees, expands the use of the VicSmart application pathway, and reduces the breadth of assessment and ability for Council to prepare local variations to ResCode standards.

Knox has a housing capacity target of 43,000 additional dwellings to 2051. This means that the planning framework in the Knox Planning Scheme should have capacity to accommodate an additional 43,000 dwellings to 2051. However, the State Government has not provided sufficient guidance on how Council should accommodate the target. Council has a role in planning for the spatial distribution of housing growth to meet the State Government housing target.

Council will need to review residential policy, zones and overlays to enable more housing in appropriate locations, particularly where access to jobs, services and opportunities is strongest. This represents an increase in existing dwelling supply by 71% over 30 years, which equates to an average of 1,433 new dwellings per year. This is well in excess of demand. Between 2016 and 2021, Knox added 1,592 new dwellings over the five years (ABS Census 2021).

Council is required to prepare a new Housing Strategy which plans for housing growth and provides a range of housing opportunities across the municipality. The new Housing Strategy will identify areas of substantial change with good access to jobs, public transport and community facilities, as well as areas of incremental and minimal change which have environmental and landscape significance. The Strategy will explore opportunities to support greater housing diversity, improve environmentally sustainable design, review neighbourhood character policies and review strategic investigation sites.

Economic Development

Knox needs to provide more local jobs to support future population growth, and community sustainability. The industrial and commercial areas in Knox are evolving, as the economy continues to modernise and transition away from a traditional manufacturing base towards more advanced economic opportunities.

These areas face increasing pressure from sensitive residential interfaces and competing uses such as core retail, small lot industrial subdivision, and non-industrial discretionary uses such as places of worship and indoor recreation facilities. The evolving logistics sector and its concentration in larger precincts elsewhere means a coherent vision for industrial land in Knox needs to be articulated.

The Bayswater Business Precinct is regionally significant industrial land, but it faces challenges as it transitions into a modern employment area. Council is collaborating with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to prepare a Structure Plan for the precinct.

Plan for Victoria identifies seven Housing Choice and Station Activity Centres in Knox. These include:

- Bayswater
- Boronia
- Ferntree Gully
- Upper Ferntree Gully
- Knox Central
- Mountain Gate, and
- Stud Park

The State Government has identified these centres as locations to support a significant number of new homes. Knox's activity centre framework needs to be updated to reflect these new classifications and prioritise future work in activity centres across the municipality.

Environmental and Rural Issues

The identification and protection of environmental and landscape significance, native vegetation and environmental hazards is especially important when planning for housing growth. Overlays are the primary tool within the Planning Scheme to protect vegetation.

The Knox Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034 and Sites of Biological Significance in Knox Volumes 1 and 2 (updated 2025) have implications for the environmental overlays in the Planning Scheme. The Vegetation Protection Overlay and Environmental Significance Overlays need to be reviewed and updated to ensure they are accurate and effective.

Further strategic work needs to be undertaken to identify areas of landslip and debris flow susceptibility and flooding risk in the Planning Scheme.

Transport, Heritage, Open Space and Administrative

Knox's limited public transport is a key challenge to support housing and jobs growth. There are no current State Government major transport projects within Knox. Improvements to the transport network remain a high priority for advocacy to the State Government.

Knox has few heritage places. A heritage study has been previously considered but funding was not allocated to the project.

Planning for housing targets has long-term implications for the demand, distribution and quality of open space. Changes in demographics, housing types, and the scale and density of housing growth need to be considered at both the municipal and suburb level. Recent State planning reforms have significantly reduced private open space requirements. Further work may be identified as part of the new Open Space Strategy including priorities to upgrade existing open space, improving access and connections to open space for employment areas and improving open space amenity, particularly access to sporting facilities.

An audit of local planning policies and schedules has identified a number of changes, which will improve the operation of the planning scheme.

Implementation / Monitoring and Review

The recommendations from the Review will be considered as part of the work program for City Strategy and Planning over the next 4 years. Some of the recommendations will be implemented as part of a policy neutral amendment. Other changes will be undertaken as part of broader strategic projects.

The State Government planning reforms are having a significant impact on the operation of the Knox Planning Scheme. It is vital that Council continually monitor the implications of the reforms, and trends in application and development types. Council must respond to reforms to ensure the Planning Scheme remains efficient and effective tool for decision making on planning permit applications.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The Review is informed by community consultation findings arising from the preparation of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024, and Knox Central Precinct Land Use Plan.

Key feedback includes:

- Support and opposition for increased building heights and density
- Need to improve pedestrian access and movement
- Support for additional tree planting
- A desire for high-quality buildings
- Need for more affordable housing
- Need to create a pleasant public realm

No further external consultation has been undertaken on the Planning Scheme Review 2026. Further information is contained in the Consultation chapter in the Review Report (Attachment 1, page 10).

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Review identifies the need to give priority to the preparation of the new Housing Strategy which will give consideration to the delivery of housing diversity, residential aged care, affordable and social housing. The Housing Strategy will focus on housing with good access to public transport, employment, shopping, open space and other services which will have positive social implications.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

The Knox Planning Scheme is an important tool to support a transition to net zero emissions for the community, as identified in the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031. Key initiatives will be considered as part of projects including:

- Low emissions building through design
- Adapt and preserve our natural environment
- Directing population growth to low-risk areas, including away from areas subject to bushfire, landslip and flooding.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Review identifies priorities to improve the Planning Scheme and strengthen support for the protection of native vegetation, habitat, biodiversity, environmental and significant landscapes, and promotes environmentally sustainable design and the management of environmental risks.

Specific projects include:

- Updating the Vegetation Protection Overlays to ensure they remain effective and identify significant trees.
- Updating the Environmental Significance Overlays to ensure they remain effective and identify areas of environmental value.
- Supporting environmentally sustainable development through the housing strategy
- Identifying areas of landslip and debris flow susceptibility
- Updating flood mapping.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This project was completed within the existing budget and staff resources of the City Strategy and Planning Unit.

Half of the recommendations already have budget allocation and can be completed within the existing City Futures budget. New projects identified will be subject to the Council budget process and Service Planning review process to determine resource allocation.

7. RISKS

The Review will help reduce Council's exposure to risks associated with an out-of-date Planning Scheme. The Knox Planning Scheme provides the legislative basis for decisions on land use and development applications, so it is important that it remains current and accurate. If the scheme is not kept up to date, there is an increased risk of inappropriate land use and development, delays in decision-making, legal disputes and missed strategic objectives.

The Review identifies and prioritise strategic planning projects for the next four years and clearly communicates these priorities to the State Government. The State Government's strategic planning agenda may influence Council's ability to progress some projects. Council will need to continue balancing community expectations with State Government requirements for the Knox Planning Scheme.

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.

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 4.4 - 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.

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.
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

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 - Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 [**6.2.1** - 56 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Knox Planning Scheme Review Background Report - 2026 [**6.2.2** - 35 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Planning Scheme Reviews, Advisory Note, March 2026 [**6.2.3** - 3 pages]

Knox Planning Scheme Review Report





2026

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Knox City Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Knox City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the City of Knox, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Knox City Council

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Executive Summary

The significant reforms undertaken by the State Government to the Victorian planning system over the past two years in response to the housing crisis have shaped the agenda for the Knox Planning Scheme Review 2026. This represents a shift in the traditional role of local governments in setting priorities for improvements and updates to local planning policies, included in the Knox Planning Scheme.

The Planning Scheme Review, Planning Advisory Note March 2026 prioritises identifying inconsistencies between local and state planning policies, particularly in response to the recent State planning reforms and Victoria's Housing Statement, which establishes a requirement for 43,000 net new dwellings in Knox by 2051. The advisory note also calls for a review of local policy settings to plan for increased housing in appropriate locations, particularly where access to jobs and services is greatest.

Planning Departments across Victoria are grappling with the State Government's planning reforms and the implications for the priorities, scope and delivery of strategic planning work. The State Government has adopted a more interventionist role by reducing development restrictions, narrowing assessment requirements and local variations, introducing new and updated approval and amendment pathways, and limiting the extent to which local policies can apply in local decision-making. The scale, pace and uncertain nature of these changes, combined with limited communication and transparency from the State Government, have created significant challenges for local governments across Victoria. For example, the use of Advisory Committees to consider major planning projects and reforms has meant that expert advice and independent review is either lacking or not transparent. In many strategic planning processes, Council's role has shifted from leading initiatives, to participating alongside other submitters.

Despite these challenges, Knox City Council has achieved a significant milestone through the completion of the Planning Policy Framework translation, which was gazetted through Amendment C191knox. This has resulted in more concise local planning policy, reducing the word count by nearly half without changing the policy intent.

Significant housing growth has been enabled through the gazettal of Amendment C194knox (former Boral Quarry redevelopment). The Amendment supports housing, commercial and retail uses, along with 68 hectares of new parkland in Wantirna South. The Amendment has rezoned land to the General Residential Zone, Mixed Use Zone and applied the Development Plan Overlay Schedule 16, the Environmental Audit Overlay and the Buffer Area Overlay. The redevelopment of the site will make a substantial contribution to Knox's housing target, with more than 1,750 new residential lots to be created.

Amendment C185knox supports employment growth through implementation of the Wantirna Health Precinct West Comprehensive Development Plan, August 2023. The Amendment facilitates the development of the Wantirna Health Precinct for employment, residential, tertiary education and health uses, while also setting aside land for public open space, including passive park areas, a public plaza and a wetland.

Council continues to face challenges in progressing strategic planning work, with the State Government recently authorising Amendment C204knox – Bayswater Renewal Strategy with extensive conditions requiring the planning controls to be redrafted to align with new controls such as the Built Form Overlay and other planning reforms including deemed to comply provisions.

The Review found the Knox Planning Scheme is operating effectively with over 570 planning permits issued in 2025, 594 in 2024 and 640 in 2023. Most applications have been processed within the statutory required timeframe (72.8% in 2025) with the median processing timeframe 50 days. Almost all VicSmart applications (97%) have been processed within the statutory required timeframe (Sourced: Department of Transport and Planning, Planning Permit Activity Reporting).

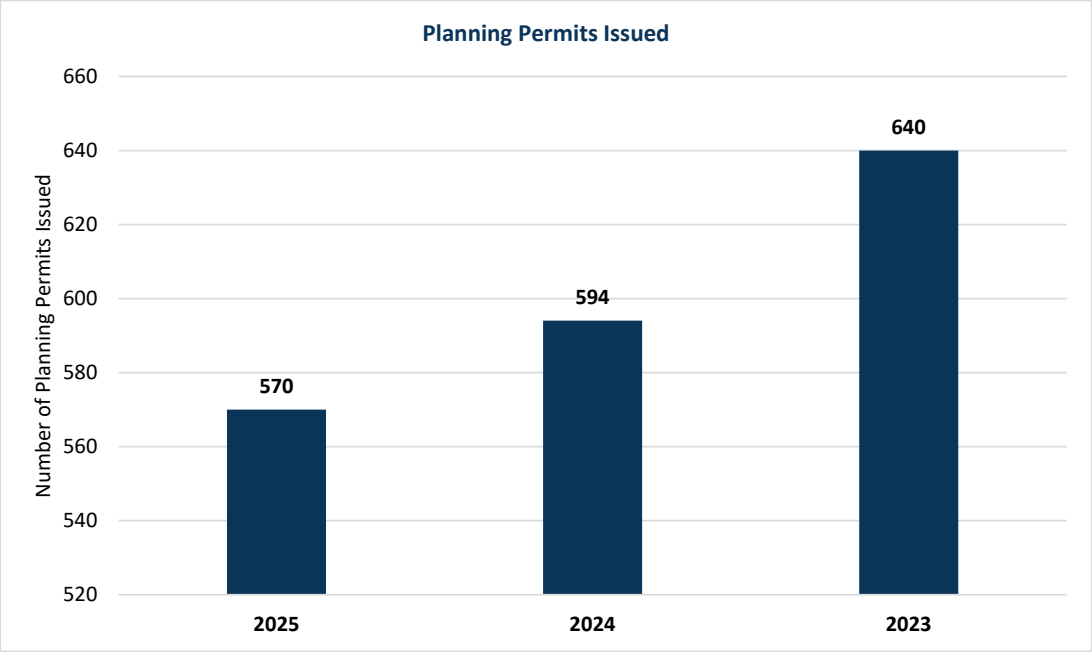


Figure 1: Planning Permits Issued by Knox Council. Sourced: Department of Transport and Planning, Planning Permit Activity Reporting.

Knox City Council has long benefited from a comprehensive and detailed planning scheme, which has helped maintain the municipality's green and leafy character. However, the Planning Scheme must remain contemporary and responsive to State Government planning reforms. Future strategic work should review tensions between local and State planning policies, particularly in relation to housing growth and neighbourhood character, and consider how new planning tools can best achieve the intended outcomes.

Recommendations

Table 1 sets out the recommendations and priorities arising from this Review. Projects expected to have the greatest impact on improving the Knox Planning Scheme have been assigned the highest priority. Budget notes have also been included where funds have been allocated. Some projects will be funded through the City Strategy operating budget, whilst others will require a Council budget bid process.

Table 1: Recommendations and priorities arising from this Review

Residential	Priority	Budget
1. Prepare a new Knox Housing Strategy which: a) Provides a range of housing opportunities across the municipality to meet the 2051 housing target, informed by HCAP. b) Identify areas for substantial change with good access to jobs, public transport and community facilities, as well as areas for incremental and minimal change where environmental constraints and landscape significance apply. c) Explore options to support greater housing diversity in Knox. d) Review existing neighbourhood character policies in the local planning policy framework. e) Investigate opportunities to improve environmentally sustainable development outcomes in residential development. f) Review strategic investigation sites currently identified in the Knox Planning Scheme. g) Investigate models for an Infrastructure Contribution Plan system to support a growing population. h) Consider the findings of the review of the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027.	High	Existing Budget

Economic Development	Priority	Budget
2. Continue to collaborate with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to progress the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan.	High	Existing Budget
3. Progress the review of the Land for Business Strategy and industrial policy in the Knox Planning Scheme to inform an evaluation of the zones and overlays on business centres.	Medium	To be funded through operation budget
4. Prepare an Activity Centres Strategy to identify the role and function of each activity centre and confirm classifications in accordance with Plan for Victoria and prioritise future strategic work.	Medium	To be funded through operation budget
5. Continue progressing strategic work to support a planning scheme amendment for the rezoning of the Knox Central Precinct 'Heart of Knox'.	Medium	Existing Budget
6. Complete Amendment C204knox to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	Existing Budget
Environmental and Rural	**Priority**	**Budget**
7. Undertake a detailed assessment for landslide and debris flow susceptibility in Knox and a planning scheme amendment to introduce the Erosion Management Overlay for affected areas.	High	Existing Budget
8. Continue partnering with Melbourne Water to implement updated flood maps and planning controls in the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	To be funded through operation budget
9. Continue to progress Amendment C196knox to fix anomalies in the Vegetation Protection Overlay 2.	High	Existing Budget
10. Undertake further work to increase vegetation protection on private land.	High	Existing Budget
11. Undertake a planning scheme amendment to implement the findings of the Sites of Biological Significance Study, Volumes 1 and 2, 3rd edition to update the Environmental Significance Overlay.	Medium	To be funded through operation budget
12. Undertake further work to better protect productive agricultural land in the Knox Planning Scheme.	Low	Not yet funded
13. Investigate the ongoing viability of rural residential areas and identify any development opportunities that would not adversely affect their rural and landscape character.	Low	Not yet funded
14. Investigate the potential rezoning of 33–35 Napoleon Road, Lysterfield to fix anomalies in the zoning of the land.	Low	Not yet funded

Administrative Changes	Priority	Budget
15. Undertake administrative planning scheme amendments as recommended by the Planning Scheme Audit.	High	To be funded through operation budget

Introduction

Requirements of the review

Knox City Council is required to review the Knox Planning Scheme every four years, under Section 12B of the Planning and Environment Act. The purpose of the review is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the planning scheme in achieving the objectives of planning in Victoria.

The Planning Scheme Review Report has been prepared to provide an overview of the performance of the Knox Planning Scheme since its last review in 2023. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Planning Scheme Review, Planning Advisory Note (March 2026). This planning scheme review includes:

- A review of state and local planning policy and strategies developed since the previous planning scheme review.
- A review of Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) decisions.
- Consideration of consultation undertaken as part of the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and other strategic planning projects.
- An audit of local planning provisions, including schedules to Zones, Overlays, Particular Provisions and General Provisions.
- A review of recent strategic planning work undertaken by Knox City Council.
- Section 12B(4) states that a review must evaluate the planning scheme to ensure that it:
- is consistent in form and content with the directions or guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 7;
- sets out effectively the policy objectives for use and development of land in the area to which the planning scheme applies; and
- makes effective use of state provisions and local provisions to give effect to state and local planning policy objectives.

While the Planning Scheme Review makes recommendations for future strategic planning work, this work is subject to further scoping, budget bids and resource allocation undertaken as part of the Strategic Planning Work Program.

Methodology

The review has been informed by the following work:

- Advice from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) following the gazettal of Amendment C191knox – Planning Policy Framework translation (see Background Report).
- Review of actions arising from the 2023 Planning Scheme Review.
- Consideration of recent demographic trends.
- Evaluation of the 2025 Housing Monitoring Report (Knox City Council).
- Analysis of planning permit activity.

- Assessment of VCAT decisions and panel reports since the previous Planning Scheme Review in August 2023.
- Summary of consultation and engagement activities undertaken since the previous Planning Scheme Review in August 2023.
- Key State planning initiatives introduced since the previous Planning Scheme Review in August 2023.
- Key local strategic initiatives undertaken since the previous Planning Scheme Review in August 2023.

Structure of Report

This Review has been structured to provide context and recommendations under four key themes. The context of the review includes demographic changes, planning permit activity, housing approvals data, Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Planning Panels decisions and findings, recent policy changes and consultation.

The key themes are as follows:

- Residential Development;
- Economic Development;
- Rural and Environmental Issues; and
- Other Issues including Transport, Heritage and Open Space.

An audit of the local provisions of the Planning Scheme is included in Appendix 1.

Background

The previous Knox Planning Scheme Review was completed in August 2023, and identified 37 recommendations. Of these recommendations:

- 13 recommendations have been completed
- 13 recommendations are underway
- 3 recommendations are no longer required
- 2 recommendations are on hold
- 2 recommendation is outstanding
- 3 recommendations are ongoing
- 1 recommendation is to be rescoped.

The underway and outstanding actions will be carried over as part of this review. This is summarised in Figure 2 below. A detailed audit of the recommendation is contained in Background Report.

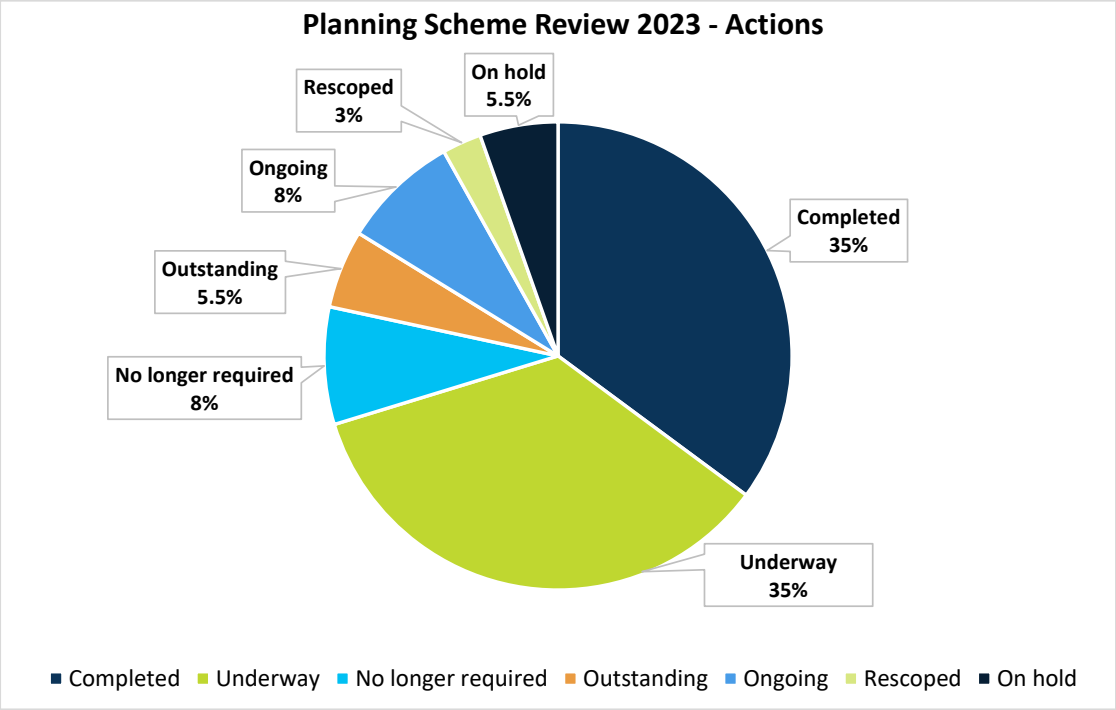


Figure 2: Actions Audit Summary, Planning Scheme Review 2023

This Review is being prepared in the context of population growth, introduction of local government housing targets, a recent increase in planning permit applications for different application and development types, growth in the total number of dwellings, a sharp decline in apartments, and a rise in

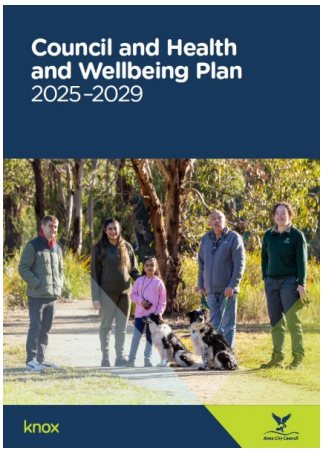
dwellings located in ‘car-dependent’ areas.

An overview of the key changes in Knox’s demographics, planning permit activity, housing monitoring data, key VCAT decisions, and Planning Panels Victoria reports. Together, this evidence helps identify the key challenges facing Knox and informs how the Knox Planning Scheme should respond is contained in Background Report.

Knox City Council

Consultation

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029



Extensive community consultation was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and the Financial Plan 2025-2035. This involved two phases of engagement including broad community consultation and a Community Panel.

In March and April 2024, the first phase of engagement activities included an online survey, in person pop ups at locations across the municipality, targeted activities at Childhood and Family Centres, attendance at the Youth Summit, and presentations at 9 Advisory Committees.

In response to the engagement activities:

- 403 residents completed the survey
- 532 residents participated in pop up discussions
- 124 residents participated in targeted activities.

Several key themes emerged from the consultation activities, including:

- The natural environment and green spaces
- Access to services and facilities
- Feeling safe at home and in public.

In April 2024, a community panel of 56 residents was formed. Panel members were selected to reflect Knox's demographic profile, including gender, household type, length of connection to Knox, and geographic location. Targeted efforts were also made to include underrepresented community groups and people who had not recently participated in Knox engagement activities. An average of 37 people attended each of the three panel sessions.

The Panel developed themes and strategic objectives, relevant strategies for the Council Plan including:

1. Advocacy and provision for essential services and resources

Council ensures that all residents have access to essential services through advocacy, and supports the provision of local services and resources, including food, education, employment and flexible transport that is both public and local.

- Increase advocacy for public transport in Knox (e.g. extending tram lines, improving safety and coverage of bike paths).
- Increase collaboration and dialogue with nearby Councils and local non-profits, to reduce duplication and optimize service provision (e.g. shared services, standard processes).
- Advocate for social and community housing provision.

2. Embrace diversity

Providing safe, respectful opportunities for social connection, education, feedback and celebration of our diverse community. We wish to foster an involved community with a strong identity that is "heard" by our Council.

3. Environmental sustainability

We want a greener, cleaner, more sustainable, healthier environment with collaborative improvement and protections that balance the needs and responsibilities of the community.

- Environmental sustainability being first priority in decision-making (e.g. Council incorporates environmental factors when planning).
- Reducing the use of cars to reduce carbon footprint (e.g. Council to advocate to reignite the train station project in Rowville).
- To promote a greener community, Council to pro-actively create flora and fauna improvement and be transparent (e.g. quadruple the number of plants being planted in a 4-year period).

4. Responsible governance

Council is transparent, responsible, accountable and capable. Community is engaged and empowered by Council's proactive, clear communication.

5. A voice for safety

A safer community for everyone, especially vulnerable people, no matter if they are at home or in public, online or offline, they are safe to live life.

The Panel developed a community vision, 'Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive'.

Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024

In April to May 2024 community engagement was undertaken to inform the preparation of the Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024. Community consultation involved:



- a postcard mailout
- email to past participants
- two pop-up events in the Bayswater Activity Centre
- meetings with key stakeholders
- local business drop in
- a 'Have Your Say' website
- social media posts
- distribution of promotional posters and flyers

A total of 104 submissions were received through completed surveys and written feedback. Several key themes emerged from this feedback, including:

- Built form and building heights: Views were mixed, with some community members raising concerns about increased building heights, while others felt the proposed heights were too conservative.
- Density of development and housing: Views were also mixed on increased housing in central Bayswater. Some supported greater housing density, while others opposed it. Some also noted that any increase in density should be accompanied by improvements to infrastructure.

- Transport and movement: Feedback highlighted the need to improve pedestrian access and movement, including better connections to public transport and car parking.
- Greening and sustainability: Feedback supported additional planting in the centre and encouraged further exploration of ways to save energy and water.

Knox Central



In March to August 2024, extensive community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken to inform the final Central Precinct Land Use Plan.

Community engagement was targeted at the following:

- Presentations at Council's Advisory Committees
- State Government Agencies
- Adjacent land owner
- Groups that use Lewis Park
- Nearby business owners
- Face to face meetings
- Pop up at Knox Library
- Online engagement.

Feedback from the engagement included:

Land Use and Built Form

- A desire for high-quality building design.
- A need for more affordable housing options, including social housing.
- Development and housing that meet the needs of people at different life stages.
- General support for higher-density housing at Knox Central.
- A preference for places that are pedestrian-friendly, walkable, and pleasant.
- A need to avoid wind tunnel effects and design a pleasant environment.
- An interest in exploring different housing delivery models, including co-housing.

Other feedback relating to access, movement, open space, natural environment, cultural and art activities can be found in the Report to Council.

Findings and Recommendations

The key engagement activities undertaken since the previous planning scheme review relate to the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024, and Knox Central precinct planning.

Across the consultations, recurring themes included environmental sustainability, access to services and facilities, safety, housing choice and density, transport, pedestrian movement, and quality public spaces.

State Government Planning Reforms

Since the last review of the Knox Planning Scheme in 2023, there has been considerable changes to planning legislation and policy at a state level. This has led the way for a shift in the role of local government in reviewing the Knox Planning Scheme.

The State Government has largely set the agenda for local government strategic work over the next 4 years through the release of the Victoria Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead 2024-2034, Plan for Victoria, setting of housing targets and the creation of the Housing Capacity Assessment Platform (HCAP) and Access To Opportunities and Services (ATOS). The direction of the State Government has been affirmed through the recent reforms including:

- Expansion of the Development Facilitation Program and VicSmart pathway
- Introduction of planning scheme amendment pathways
- Small second dwelling provisions
- New planning tools including Housing Choice and Transport Zone and Built Form Overlay
- Townhouse and low rise code
- Great design fast track
- Mid-rise code
- Canopy tree reforms
- Parking provisions reforms
- Bushfire planning reforms.

Findings and Recommendations

Responding to the State Government Planning Reforms will be a key focus going forward. While the number of State planning reforms being released is now slowing, this will still require consequential changes to local planning scheme provisions. This is expected as the State Government continues to reduce local discretion in decision-making on planning matters. Further details of the State Government Reforms are included in Background Report.

Local Strategic Initiatives

Since the 2023 Review, Council has adopted a new Council Plan and several strategies relevant to the Knox Planning Scheme. A range of planning scheme amendments have either been approved or are progressing through the amendment process. The relevant local strategic initiatives and amendments are summarised below.

Council Plan

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (the Council Plan) was adopted in June 2025. The Council Plan provides a roadmap on how to improve services, infrastructure and support for residents in Knox.

The relevant themes and associated strategic objectives to the Knox Planning Scheme are:

- Theme 1: Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources.
  Strategic objective: Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.
- Theme 5: Caring for and enhancing our environment.
  Strategic objective: Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.
- Theme 6: Planning our future city.
  Strategic objective: Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

It is recommended that Clause 02.02 Vision should be updated to align with the current vision in the Council Plan.

Since the 2023 Review, the following strategies have been adopted:

- Green Areas and Rural Strategy (December 2023)
- Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019 (Revised 2021)
- Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024)
- Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 (January 2024)
- Knox Cycling Action Plan 2024-2035.

Planning Scheme Amendments

Since the 2023 Review, 8 local Council amendments have been approved. Three amendments have been requested, and one has been authorised. These amendments include both Council and Ministerial led amendments and have been summarised below.

- Rowville Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Amendment C189knox
- Wantirna Health Precinct - Amendment C185knox
- Boronia Activity Centre - Amendment C203knox, Amendment C192knox
- The Basin Solar Farm - Amendment C202knox

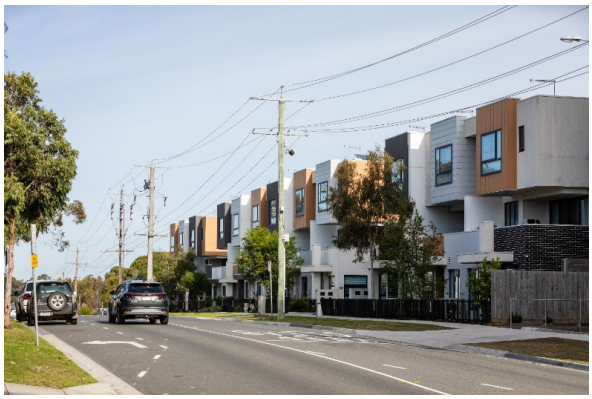
- Norvel Quarry Redevelopment- Combined Amendment C184knox & Planning Permit Application P/2020/6049
- Eastlink - Amendment C201knox
- Boral Quarry Redevelopment - Amendment C194knox
- Elevated Environmentally Sustainable Development - Amendment C197knox
- Bayswater Activity Centre - Amendment C204knox
- Vegetation Protection Overlay - Amendment C196knox
- Churchill Waverley Golf and Bowls Club - Amendment C157knox.

Further details of local strategies and Amendments can be found in Background Report.

Findings and Recommendations

Several local strategic initiatives have strengthened the strategic basis of the Knox Planning Scheme. Key priorities include updating Clause 02.02 to reflect the current Council Plan vision, continuing the implementation of adopted structure plans and environmental strategies, and progressing relevant planning scheme amendments, particularly Amendment C204knox and Amendment C196knox.

Residential development



Planning policy for residential development has undergone significant reform. The State Government has reduced the restrictions and the breadth of assessment undertaken for applications for residential development. It has also reduced the scope for Council to prepare policy and local planning controls.

The Knox Housing Strategy 2015 was adopted in January 2015 and implemented through Amendment C131knox. The Housing Strategy sets out Council's plan for managing growth and development by:

- Encouraging high-density and intensive development in Activity Areas and Local Living hubs where there is strong access to public transport, shopping, employment, and community facilities.
- Limiting development in sensitive or environmentally significant areas (such as the Dandenong Foothills and Bush Suburban areas) to preserve the local landscape, protect indigenous vegetation, and maintain tree canopies.

Council is now required to plan for increased housing across all areas within settlement boundaries, unless environmental constraints or special characteristics, such as heritage, neighbourhood character, or landscape significance apply.

The Strategy is accompanied by a detailed set of Residential Design Guidelines (revised 2019).

The Council Plan has identified the need to commence preparation of a new Knox Housing Strategy. The Knox Housing Strategy will be expected to respond to the outcomes and recommendations in Plan for Victoria and demonstrate how the Knox housing target will be accommodated over time.

Housing Growth and Capacity

Planning Practice Note 90: Planning for Housing requires Council to plan to accommodate housing targets, provide clear direction on the locations where growth should occur and ensure sufficient realisable capacity.

The State Government released housing targets for all Councils across Victoria. The housing target for Knox is 43,000 new dwellings to be built by 2051. In 2021, there were 60,403 private dwellings in Knox (ABS Census 2021). Achieving the housing target will require an additional 71% increase on top of the existing dwellings in Knox over a 30-year period. This equates to an average of 1,433 new dwellings per year. An additional 1,592 dwellings have been constructed in Knox between 2016 and 2021 (ABS Census 2021).

Plan for Victoria requires that the Knox Planning Scheme provides enough realistic opportunities for new development to deliver the targeted number of homes. If not, the State Government has indicated they will hold councils accountable with explicit directions to change planning schemes if they are not providing enough housing capacity, and, if required, they will step in to update schemes and work with councils to ensure they're on track to achieve their target.

The Housing Capacity and Assessment Platform (HCAP) identifies a net theoretical capacity of 119,552 dwellings and a housing target capacity surplus of 1,339 dwellings. HCAP considers zoning and constraints such as overlays, tree point data, and aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. However, it does not consider Design and Development Overlays. In addition, some properties are excluded from the modelling, as outlined in the HCAP Companion Guide, including lots smaller than 200sqm and greater than 5,000sqm.

Access To Opportunities and Services (ATOS) is incorporated into HCAP and has been designed to align with State planning policy. ATOS functions as a 'liveability map' (refer to Figure 3), grading housing locations according to level of access to jobs, community facilities and services (such as supermarkets, medical services and open space), without relying on a private vehicle. The higher the score, the more suitable the land is considered for housing change.

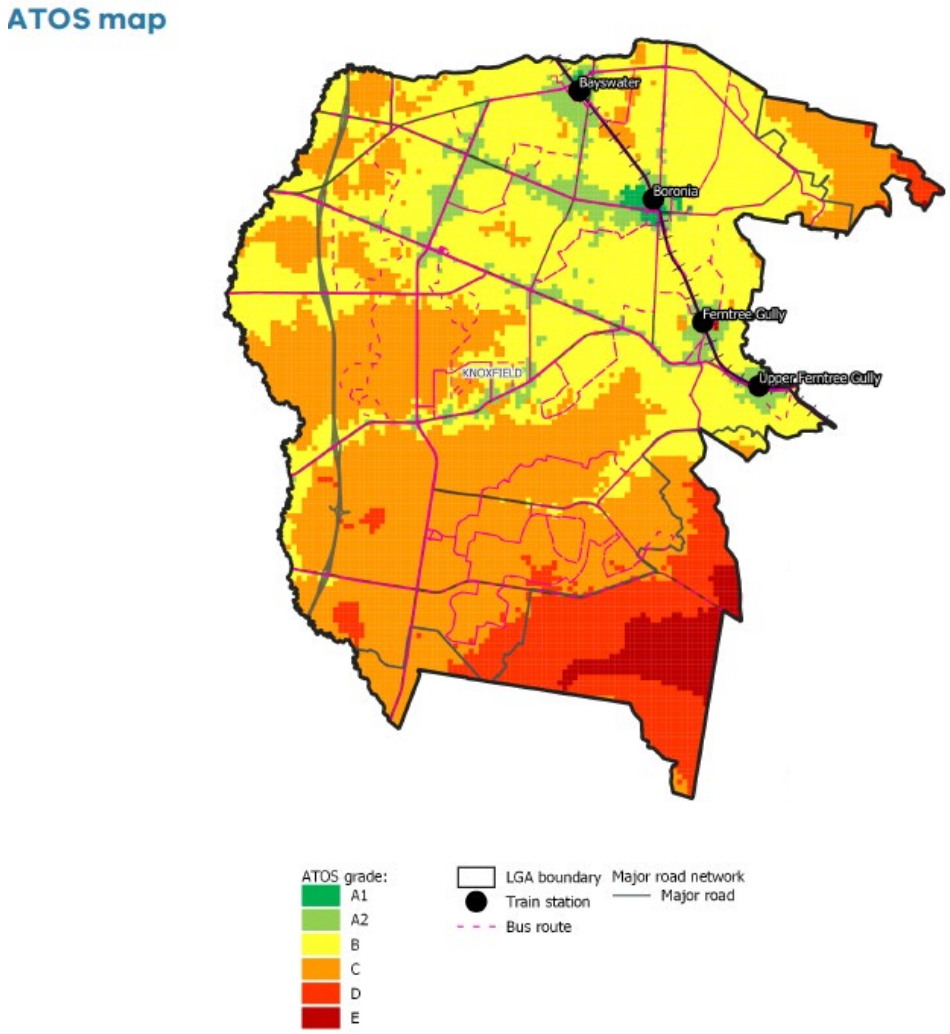


Figure 3: Knox Council Access to Opportunities and Services Map

Knox is required to plan for the spatial distribution of housing growth and cannot vary the State Government housing target. This will involve a consideration of residential land use policy, and zone and overlay arrangements to ensure increased housing is enabled in appropriate locations, particularly where access to opportunities and services is highest. This is in accordance with the guidance provided in Planning Practice Note 90 Planning for Housing and Planning Practice Note 91 - Using the Residential Zones.

New housing should be provided in locations with good access to transport, employment, shopping, open space and other services. The Housing Strategy will designate all residential areas into an area of change based on proximity to public transport and services, environmental constraints and existing built form. The housing change areas will include substantial change, incremental change and minimal change.

State and local planning policy supports growth in well-designed, walkable neighbourhoods that contribute to healthy and liveable communities. These neighbourhoods are characterised by a mix of land uses and housing types, with good access to quality public transport Clause 15.01-4S Healthy neighbourhoods seeks to create 20 minute neighbourhoods, that give people the ability to meet most of their everyday needs within a 20 minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip from their home.

Council is monitoring the location of new homes and their car dependency. A total of 70% of new dwellings in 2025 were in “Car Dependent” areas, a substantial increase from 28% in both 2024 and 2023, and 24% in 2022 (Housing Monitoring Report 2025, Knox City Council). Car dependent areas were defined by a walkability score below 50, measured by Walkscore Index. This shift raises concerns as it may reinforce car reliance, reduce access to services and employment, and decrease affordability. Knox is largely car dependent. Therefore, locating new dwellings closer to train stations, bus terminals and key services is essential to achieving improved accessibility outcomes and supporting more sustainable patterns of development. Council will carefully examine opportunities for housing growth in activity centres and strategic investigation sites. As part of the new Housing Strategy, Clause 16.01-1L Housing Supply should be reviewed, including any inconsistencies with State directions for housing growth.

Housing Diversity

Housing diversity assists in providing housing choice, affordability and adaptability, and supports aging in place. New housing should meet and respond to the changing needs of existing and future residents across their lifetime.

Most of the housing in Knox is detached dwellings (82%), 17% of dwellings are medium density, and 1.6% are high density (ABS Census 2021). In 2025, 85% of net new dwellings approved were large dwellings (greater than or equal to 3 bedrooms). Over the past decade, the average has been 73% large dwellings, while 82.1% of existing dwellings already fall into this category (Knox City Council Housing Monitoring Report 2025).

Amendment VC267 introduced a new standard in Clause 55.03-1 to encourage a greater range of dwelling sizes and types in developments of 10 or more dwellings. The standard requires one one-bedroom or two-bedroom dwelling for every 10 dwellings, and one dwelling with three bedrooms or more for every 10 dwellings. However, one dwelling in every ten is unlikely to create diversity in housing stock. The Housing Strategy should explore options to support greater housing diversity in Knox.

Design of Multi Dwelling Development

Council’s ability to influence built-form outcomes of residential development has been significantly reduced by the State Government Planning Reforms, in particular the Mid Rise Code and Low Rise Code deem to comply requirements.

Neighbourhood Character

A review of the neighbourhood character policy is required in the context of the State Government reforms for residential development. Clause 15.01-5L Neighbourhood Character, contains neighbourhood character objectives, building heights and design requirements that should be reviewed for potential conflict with state planning policy and the relevant zone provisions. It is recommended that a policy neutral amendment be undertaken to translate the neighbourhood character policies into neighbourhood character objectives in the schedule to the residential zones. As part of Amendment C191knox, the Department of Transport and Planning included a sunset clause in this provision. Planning Practice Note 91, Using the Residential Zones, advises that a maximum building height that is lower than the maximum specified in a residential zone can only be implemented through an overlay that recognises environmental constraints or special characteristics.

In the VCAT decision 28 Station Street Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2025] VCAT 220 (18 March 2025), the Tribunal highlighted a policy gap in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone 6 – Ferntree Gully Village. The schedule provides no neighbourhood character objectives, nor does Clause 15.01-5L Neighbourhood Character sets a preferred character for the area. Many of the residential zone schedules do not contain neighbourhood character objectives.

In the past, Council has been successful with disputes regarding neighbourhood character at VCAT. Several VCAT decisions have focussed on responding to neighbourhood character and the sense of openness of the built form. Many residential parts of Knox continue to retain low scale neighbourhoods, characterised by detached houses and dual occupancies, with some villa units on larger blocks. Current planning policies seek to retain their "green and leafy character through the retention of front and backyards" (Flower Street Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2023] VCAT 970 (31 August 2023)). In Marshall v Knox CC [2023] VCAT 1313 (30 November 2023) the Tribunal found "…the excessive built form scale and massing together with the poor response to landscape character and secluded private open space, … cumulatively exhibit an over-development of the land…[which] warrants refusal of the application". Council should investigate opportunities to retain the green leafy character, where possible.

Lot sizes per dwelling have reduced considerably between 2024 and 2025 (Housing Monitoring Report 2025, Knox City Council). The average lot size of new homes in 2025 in the Bush Suburban area is 361sqm, 287sqm in the Knox Neighbourhood, and 146sqm in the Local Living. This is a considerable reduction in lot sizes from 2024, see Table 2. While reducing lots sizes may improve housing affordability there is also concern that it may contribute to poor design, poor internal amenity and greater pressure on space for tree canopy planting. Council should continue to advocate for better design outcomes through the deem to comply requirements to the State Government.

Table 2: Average Lot Size Per Dwelling

Year	Bush Suburban	Knox Neighbourhood	Local Living
2025	361sqm	287sqm	146sqm
2024	549sqm	499sqm	220sqm

Source: Housing Monitoring Report 2025

Responding to a Change in Climate

Knox is experiencing more storm events and increasing temperatures because of climate change. How our built environment responds to these changes can impact our health, safety and amenity.

Buildings should be designed to reduce energy consumption, particularly during periods of peak demand, by minimising reliance on lighting, heating and cooling. Council has worked in partnership with other CASBE councils to support the elevating Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) targets planning policy. However, it is unlikely that the Minister for Planning will authorise the amendment. Council should therefore investigate other opportunities to strengthen environmentally sustainable design in residential development, including on-site energy generation, electric vehicle infrastructure, green walls and green roofs for cooling, shade and amenity, water-sensitive landscaping, deep soil areas for tree planting, and the use of insulating, light-coloured and low embodied energy materials.

Infrastructure Planning

The State Government has released a new Infrastructure Contribution Plan system for declared activity centre areas under the Ministerial Directions Infrastructure Contribution Plans. To date, these new requirements have been applied to 10 activity centres planned as part of the Activity Centre Pilot Program.

The Plan requires developers to pay a standardised contribution of $11,350 for each new home they deliver. They will also pay $114 per sqm of new commercial space or $57per sqm for industrial space. This will help fund community services, education and transport infrastructure. Council retains two-thirds of the funds for local infrastructure and will pay one-third to the Victorian Government for state infrastructure. Given the significant growth to be planned for if Knox's housing target of an additional 43,000 new homes is to be met, significant investment and planning will be required for infrastructure. This includes education, cultural, health and community support (mental health, aged care, disability, youth and family services) facilities and open space. Council should scope models for infrastructure contribution planning to support growth.

Social and Affordable Housing

The State Government's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024–2034 aims to increase the supply of social and affordable housing. It seeks to do this by accelerating and streamlining housing approvals, including fast-tracked approvals for social housing projects developed by, or on behalf of, Homes Victoria under Clauses 52.20 and 52.30.

Once the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026 has been implemented, the Act will allow affordable housing contributions to be required as a condition of planning permit.

In Knox, social housing increased by 115 dwellings (7.7%) in 2025, bringing the total to 1,606 dwellings. This was the largest annual increase since 2017. Despite this growth, housing affordability declined in both the rental and property markets for very low- and low-income households during 2025.

Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027 sets a target for voluntary developer contributions of 5% towards social housing, to be provided as land, dwellings or monetary contributions on strategic investigation sites and rezoning proposals. There is increasing demand for social and affordable housing in Knox. The Strategy and Action Plan has recently been reviewed. The development of a new social and affordable strategy is pending, which will help inform the new Housing Strategy.

While Council has been successful negotiating affordable housing into recent developments, a standard legislated requirement is likely to result in more consistent, transparent and better outcomes. In Amendment C184knox, Council negotiated a minimum of eight lots for social housing.

Findings and Recommendations

Work on the Housing Strategy commenced in 2023 but was put on hold pending the release of consecutive State planning reforms over the past two years. There was uncertainty about timing, content and extent of changes.

A new Housing Strategy is required to establish a clear framework for residential development over the next 30 years. The new Housing Strategy will:

a) Provide a range of housing opportunities across the municipality to meet the 2051 housing target, informed by HCAP.

b) Identify areas for substantial change with good access to jobs, public transport and community facilities, as well as areas for incremental and minimal change where environmental constraints and landscape significance apply.

c) Explore options to support greater housing diversity in Knox.

d) Review existing neighbourhood character policies in the local planning policy framework.

e) Investigate opportunities to improve environmentally sustainable development outcomes in residential development.

f) Review strategic investigation sites currently identified in the Knox Planning Scheme.

g) Investigate models for an Infrastructure Contribution Plan system to support a growing population.

h) Consider the findings of the review of the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027.

Economic development



The State Government's recent planning reforms have focussed on residential growth. However, commercial and industrial development is also important to provide jobs and services to support a growing population. Plan for Victoria states that, by 2050, land for around 1.7 million additional jobs will be required. Action 8 seeks to create more jobs and opportunities closer to where people live by identifying new industrial and commercial land ready for development.

Knox has a strong employment base. Id. Consulting estimate there were 84,183 jobs in Knox in 2025. Manufacturing was the largest employer in Knox in 2024, generating 12,293 local jobs. The second largest employer is health care and social assistance. However, there is still an undersupply of jobs, when compared to the working population of Knox. Approximately two thirds (65%) of working residents in Knox, travel outside the city of Knox for work.

Business

The Knox Land for Business Review 2018 provides the strategic direction for employment land over the next 20 years, having regard to employment directions, current land supply, economic trends, drivers of change and planning policy. The Review recognised there is likely to be a significant shortfall of business land in Knox within the next 20 years. It also recommends Council better utilise a diversity of zones and schedules in business areas to provide greater direction for the market and better management of sensitive interfaces.

As Knox transitions away from manufacturing, there is ongoing pressure to rezone or use industrial land for other non-industrial uses such as accommodation or retail uses which are often better located in activity centres. Retail uses can conflict with industrial uses, through traffic and noise. There has been an increase in the use of land for storage and warehousing, with low levels of employment within industrial areas, which can detract from the vitality of the area. The subdivision of industrial land often makes it unviable for future industrial uses. Key industrial areas need to be retained as a source of business activity and employment with limited commercial areas and not further subdivided. Significant industrial precincts need to be protected from incompatible land uses to allow for future growth. There is a need to plan for amenity and interface issues that may arise where sensitive uses locate close to or adjacent to industrial activities.

Further work is required to determine the most appropriate zones and schedules for the business areas. As part of this work a review of Clause 17.01-1L Diversified economy is required to remove ambiguous wording and content that conflicts with the Zone provisions. There is also a need to review setback requirements in industrial areas, to ensure the intended outcomes are being achieved without compromising the viability of the site for business. It is recommended that a desktop assessment of setbacks in industrial areas be undertaken.

Of relevance to this work is the VCAT decision, Planning Vision Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 48 (17 January 2024). Council refused the application for a place of assembly on the basis it does not align with the Industrial 1 Zone and is contrary to the planning policies and the strategic directions contained in the Core Employment Land Area: Bayswater Business Precinct. However, Council's decision was set aside, and VCAT directed that a planning permit be issued because of its small scale, and operation in conjunction with an as-of-right use. The Tribunal found that it will not undermine the intent of industrial policy or the protection of industrial land for industrial purposes. This decision demonstrates the pressure the industrial land is under from other uses.

Bayswater Business Precinct

The Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) is an established employment area in Melbourne's outer east, occupying approximately 730 hectares. It is identified as a Regionally Significant Industrial Precinct (RSIP) in State Planning Policy. The BBP is the second largest employment hub in eastern Melbourne, supporting some 5,000 businesses and over 33,000 jobs, with 70% of workers living in neighbouring municipalities. Key industries include manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail trade. The BBP has an estimated annual revenue of $14 billion, which is approximately 12.5% of Melbourne East's total revenue, and $8 billion in exports.

Despite this significant economic output and employment base, the BBP faces challenges limiting its capacity to transition to a modern industrial area. Knox City Council is collaborating with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Council to prepare a structure plan for the precinct.

The Structure Plan will provide a long-term approach for how the precinct should grow and change over time to remain competitive, accessible, and resilient. It aims to protect the precinct's industrial role while improving access and amenity. It focuses on five key themes: land use and activity, built form, public realm, access and movement and strategic sites.

The draft Structure Plan is currently being finalised, for community consultation, with both the residential and business communities of Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges. Following consultation, the draft Structure Plan will be updated and approval sought by all three Councils to adopt and implement.

Caribbean Gardens

Caribbean Gardens is a premier business estate in Scoresby, identified as regionally significant industrial land that should be protected in Clause 17.03-3R Regionally significant industrial land – Metropolitan Melbourne – Eastern Metro Region. Development is managed through Commercial 2 Zone and the Development Plan Overlay 6 – Scoresby – Rowville Employment Precinct. The Caribbean Gardens Park Development Plan was approved on 23 July 2012. It establishes 4 precincts: existing buildings, office park, neighbourhood activity centre and wetlands and open space.



Caribbean Gardens seeks to attract global tenants in high-end information technology, office, research and development, and warehouse sectors. The approved development plan supports environmentally sustainable design, high-quality amenity and open space outcomes. The plan also notes that businesses operate through long-term leases on building sites, rather than through individual lot ownership. This

single-ownership model, supported by the development plan, has helped deliver a cohesive design response and a unified long-term vision for the estate. Given the low vacancy rate, economic success of Caribbean Gardens and the existing development plan, no changes to the planning controls are currently recommended.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has identified the need to further consider Clause 15.01-1L – Urban design in Industrial Zones and Commercial 2 Zone and Clause 13.07-1 Non-residential use and development in residential areas. This work will assess any inconsistencies with State policy, including the use of local policies to set building heights and consideration of whether local planning policies are the most appropriate tool.

Data Centres

Data centres are a new use emerging in Victoria, Australia and internationally. Data centres house computer infrastructure such as servers and storage systems, which are used to process, store, and manage digital data. They are created to cater for growing demands for data on devices. A data centre working group started in 2025 which includes councils such as Wyndham, Hume and Geelong. Currently, there are no data centre applications that have been submitted in Knox.

The impacts of data centres include high energy and water use, large land consumption, visual bulk concerns and noise. Planning permit applications for data centres are typically considered by DTP's Development Facilitation Program as State Significant Economic Development under Clause 53.22 of the Knox Planning Scheme. Council's role is as a submitter on these matters.

The State Government has released notice of the preparation of Amendment VC324 to the Victoria Planning Provisions which will introduce Clause 19.04-1S to facilitate the sustainable development of data centres as critical infrastructure in locations that minimise land use impacts and support the efficient use of infrastructure and resources. The Amendment will make data centres prohibited in residential zones, the Green Wedge Zone, Rural Living Zone and Rural Conservation Zone, and are a Section 2 permit required use in commercial and industrial zones, Farming Zone, Rural Activity Zone and the Urban Growth Zone (where no structure plan applies) when located at least 150 metres from buildings used for accommodation, hospitals or education centres.

It is recommended that Council review the implications of the pending Amendment on the Knox Planning Scheme in relation to the where data centres may be proposed.

Activity Centres

State Government planning reforms have emphasised the role of activity centres in accommodating residential growth. However, activity centres must also continue to prioritise commercial development and services to support their broader economic and community functions. Plan for Victoria designates 7 housing choice and station activity centres in Knox. These centres have been assessed by the State Government as providing sufficient public transport, facilities and services to support large number of new homes. In Knox these activity centres include:

- Bayswater
- Boronia
- Ferntree Gully
- Upper Ferntree Gully
- Knox Central

- Mountain Gate
- Stud Park.

Knox's activity centre framework should be updated to reflect these classifications. The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has identified a mismatch between the classification of activity centres in policy and in the Municipal Planning Strategy. It is recommended that Council prepare an Activity Centres Strategy to define the role and function of each centre, assess structure-planning needs based on potential growth scenarios, and set priorities for structure planning.

As part of the Housing Strategy, Council will undertake a high level review of activity centres and their reliance on local planning policies for design requirements. There will be further opportunities, as part of the Activity Centre Strategy to explore the use of other planning tools to support activity centre design. This will include a review of:

- Clause 11.03-1L Boronia Major Activity Centre
- Clause 11.03-1L Bayswater Major Activity Centre
- Clause 11.03-1L Rowville Major Activity Centre
- Clause 11.03-1L Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre
- Clause 11.03-1L Upper Ferntree Gully Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre
- Clause 15.01-1L – Urban design for residential land use in the Commercial 1 Zone.

Council endeavours to support further development in activity centres through Amendment C204knox, which seeks to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Planning Scheme. Council will continue to advocate for the authorisation of the Amendment.

Knox Central

Knox Central is the largest activity centre in Knox. The Knox Central Structure Plan 2017 was implemented into the Planning Scheme as part of Amendment C149knox. The Plan seeks to:

- Support attractive development connected to the natural environment.
- Rejuvenate Lewis Park and Blind Creek
- Provide high quality built form in the public realm
- Enhance Knox Central's role as the civic and public heart of the municipality
- Create new and improved civic spaces
- Contribute to a range of housing opportunities for people to live in Knox Central.

Council is continuing strategic work to inform the preparation of planning controls for the Knox Central Precinct. This includes investigating community needs for civic buildings and spaces and reviewing the existing overlay controls.

Signs

Since the 2023 Planning Scheme Review, Council has received more than 100 planning permit applications for signs. Clause 15.01-1L Signs has been effective in supporting Council's decisions on signage applications, particularly at VCAT. However, there is a need to review Clause 15.01-1L Signs, to clarify ambiguous content, remove repetition with State policy, address any conflicts with the decision guidelines in Clause 52.02 Signs, and consider recent trends in signs such as electronic signs. The Department of Transport and Planning has included a sunset provision in the current policy. Clause 15.01-1L Signs considers illuminated

signs, but not electronic signs.

The importance of Clause 15.01-1L Signs has been demonstrated in the following VCAT decisions. In Media Circus (VIC) Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 1033 (28 October 2024), the sign was found to be out of scale and proportion with the host building. In Maple Media Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2025] VCAT 1077 (5 December 2025), the Tribunal found the sign's siting, height and proportions unacceptable in its setting, having regard to existing character and landscape policies. In Media Circus (VIC) Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2025] VCAT 1129 (29 December 2025), the Tribunal found the proposed sign would be a dominant streetscape element, with scale and height unacceptably large relative to the host building and surrounding built form.

Findings and Recommendations

Knox has a strong employment base, including the Bayswater Business Precinct, Caribbean Gardens, and other local industrial precincts. As business and industrial activity evolves, industrial and business land should be protected from encroachment by other uses, particularly residential development. Further activity centre planning is needed to keep planning frameworks up to date and support housing growth while maintaining commercial development and employment opportunities.

The following projects are recommended to be undertaken to support economic development in Knox:

- Continue to collaborate with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to progress the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan.
- Progress the review of the Land for Business Strategy and industrial policy in the Knox Planning Scheme to inform an evaluation of the zones and overlays on business centres.
- Prepare an Activity Centres Strategy to identify the role and function of each activity centre, confirm classifications in accordance with Plan for Victoria and priorities future strategic work.
- Continue progressing strategic work to support a planning scheme amendment for the rezoning of the Knox Central Precinct, 'Heart of Knox'.
- Complete Amendment C204knox to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme.

Rural and Environment

Rural Areas



The Planning and Environment Act 1987 requires the preparation of a green wedge management plan.

Ministerial Directions on the preparation and content of Green Wedge Management Plans requires Council to set out the long term vision, strategies and actions to protect, enhance and manage non-urban land.

There are limited opportunities for agricultural in Knox, and limited guidance in the Planning Scheme. The Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) identified some areas as suitable for more intensive agricultural use. However, more intensive agriculture is likely to occur mainly through hobby farms and in conjunction with other land uses. Further work is needed to better protect productive agricultural land, while enabling associated uses such as restaurants, wineries, visitor accommodation and eco-tourism in appropriate areas.

Knox's rural residential areas make an important contribution to landscape character and the protection of native vegetation. These areas are under increasing pressure from more intensive development and subdivision. Although these areas often offer high amenity, they can also be affected by bushfire, flooding and landslip risk, and may have limited access to public transport, services and infrastructure. Further work is needed to support the ongoing viability of rural residential areas and to identify any development opportunities that would not adversely affect their rural and landscape character.

Further strategic work is needed to manage changes associated with the Lysterfield Quarry, including consideration of sensitive interfaces with the National and State parks and adjoining buffer areas.

The Dandenong Creek Valley lies between Dandenong Creek and EastLink, forming the western boundary of the municipality. Nearly two-thirds of the valley comprises waterways, public open space, sports fields, walking and cycling trails, and water treatment facilities, with significant landholdings owned by Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water. The area also includes private farmland and semi-rural land that is not connected to reticulated sewerage. Its environmental values are increasingly under pressure from development, including the Boral Quarry and Jenkins Orchard redevelopment. Further work is recommended to engage key stakeholders and prepare strategic plans for the area.

The land at 33–35 Napoleon Road, Lysterfield, is zoned Neighbourhood Residential Zone and Urban Floodway Zone and is located outside the Urban Growth Boundary. The land is also identified as a Specific Site and Exclusion under Clause 51.01, which applies the provisions of Clause 57. Clause 57 previously contained the requirements for green wedge land, these are now set out in Clause 51.02 Metropolitan Green Wedge Land: Core Planning Provisions. Clause 51.02 imposes additional requirements on the use and subdivision of land. Further work is needed to investigate the potential rezoning of the land and to correct the anomalies in Clause 51.02.

Native Vegetation and Rural Landscapes

The Knox Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034 identifies the need to update the Sites of Biological Significance Study. Relevant recommendations relating to tree canopy targets, connectivity zone boundaries and habitat corridors should be implemented into the Planning Scheme.

Areas of high environmental value are often subject to bushfire risk. Further work should be undertaken to better educate the community on vegetation management in bushfire prone areas. Council should consider the development of design guidelines that assist in providing safe approaches to biodiversity enhancements and preservation of the landscape character in bushfire prone areas. These guidelines would sit outside the Planning Scheme but help inform the community.

Council is reviewing the Vegetation Protection Overlays. Stage 1 is underway through Amendment C196knox, which makes administrative changes to Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 2. Stages 2 and 3 will involve identifying gaps and opportunities to improve the Overlay, informed by Sites of Biological Significance in Knox Volumes 1 and 2 (updated 2025). Careful consideration should be given to protecting vegetation in and around activity centres and significant change areas, where residential development is a priority.

Landslip Risk

Council is undertaking a review to identify areas of landslip susceptibility and debris flow in Knox. A preliminary investigation has found that there are some sites that should be included in the Erosion Management Overlay (EMO). Following the completion of the study a planning scheme amendment will be required to introduce the EMO to the Knox Planning Scheme.

Flooding

On 3 October 2025, the Premier for Victoria announced that Melbourne Water and Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) will lead flood modelling and community engagement to streamline flood-related planning scheme amendments led by the Minister for Planning – reducing the cost and administrative burden for local councils. Knox City Council has been working with Melbourne Water to update local flood maps. Council has completed its flood study, and Melbourne Water has advised that its mapping is expected to be completed by December 2027.

Findings and Recommendations

Increasing residential development pressure will place growing pressure to introduce further competing land uses on environmental and rural land. The Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) provides a comprehensive framework for managing these areas, but further work is needed to implement its key recommendations in the Planning Scheme, particularly for rural residential development and the protection of agricultural land.

Updates to the Environmental Significance Overlay and Vegetation Protection Overlay will strengthen the Planning Scheme's ability to protect native vegetation. Identifying environmental hazards, including landslip, debris flow and flood risk, is also important to help property owners understand potential risks and assist in mitigation.

The following recommendations will help protect rural landscapes, environmental values and community safety as Knox accommodates future growth:

- Undertake a detailed assessment for landslide and debris flow susceptibility in Knox and undertake a planning scheme amendment to introduce the Erosion Management Overlay for affected areas.
- Continue partnering with Melbourne Water to implement updated flood maps and planning controls in the Knox Planning Scheme.
- Continue to progress Amendment C196knox to fix anomalies in the Vegetation Protection Overlay 2.
- Undertake further work to increase vegetation protection on private land.
- Undertake a planning scheme amendment to implement the findings of the Sites of Biological Significance Study, Volumes 1 and 2, 3rd edition to update the Environmental Significance Overlay.
- Undertake further work to better protect productive agricultural land in the Knox Planning Scheme.
- Investigate the ongoing viability of rural residential areas and identify any development opportunities that would not adversely affect their rural and landscape character.
- Investigate the potential rezoning of 33–35 Napoleon Road, Lysterfield to fix anomalies in the zoning of the land.

Other Themes

This chapter covers three key themes: transport, open space and heritage. These areas are not expected to be a focus of strategic work going forward. However, Council will continue to advocate for public transport upgrades and will consider heritage and open space issues more broadly as part of other strategic work.

Transport

Knox's limited public transport will be a particular challenge to support housing and jobs growth. The municipality remains highly car dependent, and there are no current State Government transport major projects within Knox. The delivery of transport infrastructure to outer metropolitan areas has not been undertaken effectively and will continue to disadvantage residents, workers and visitors to the area.

Given the proximity of the Suburban Rail Loop East (SRL) to Knox it may promote further pressure to densify housing in Knox. Local bus connections to the SRL will make it easier to connect across the south eastern suburbs.

Plan for Victoria contains the following actions relating to transport:

- Action 7 - Improve transport network planning policy
- Action 14 - Make better use of land at train stations
- Action 17 - Encourage walking and cycling

The State Government aims to identify key transport routes and a network of corridors in the planning scheme. It also plans to improve spaces around train stations and develop active transport strategies to support Victorians to walk, cycle and scoot.

Knox City Council continues to advocate for State Government funding to extend Route 75 from Vermont South to Knox City Shopping Centre, and for a trackless tram or light rail connection from Caulfield or Oakleigh to Rowville. Council also supports high-frequency bus services to provide direct links between key centres and railway stations. High-frequency bus services typically include dedicated bus lanes, priority at intersections, more frequent and reliable services, and larger bus stops or stations.

If the State Government funds the Knox City tram extension or the Rowville trackless tram/light rail this would improve liveability and intensify pressure for increased housing in Knox Central and Rowville respectively. Both Knox Central and Rowville are already established activity centres and likely to continue to support housing growth a reduced intensity.

The Knox Cycling Action Plan (2024-2035) identifies need to improve links between homes and key destinations, services and facilities across Knox. Upgrading cycle routes and connections was identified as part of the Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024 and Boronia Renewal Strategy 2021. Improving cycle links should be considered as part of future structure planning work.

Heritage



The State Government has recently streamlined assessments and approvals of heritage places through the 2026 Local Heritage Guidelines. The heritage criteria remain largely the same, but they have been simplified and clarified. Plan for Victoria identifies the need to make the planning system fairer for Traditional Owners and First Peoples. This includes seeking opportunities to better reflect Traditional Owners' rights and interests in Victoria's planning system. These could be informed by Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessments. It is proposed to give registered Aboriginal Parties are given early notification of proposed development on land that has been prescribed to be culturally sensitive. These changes are proposed to be incorporated into the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026. Council will consider the best approach to engage with the Registered Aboriginal Party as part of each project.

There are 60 heritage places identified in the Knox Planning Scheme. Heritage studies are costly and resource intensive. A previous bid for budget to undertake further heritage studies was not successful. Heritage issues will be considered broadly as part of other projects including the Housing Strategy and Activity Centre Strategy.

Open Space



Plan for Victoria seeks to introduce minimum standards and guidance for open space in established urban areas by amending the Victorian Planning Provisions. Specifically, the State Government will introduce minimum standards into planning schemes that specify the types of open space there should be close to homes in established urban areas. The State Government is also planning on implementing planning controls for activity centres and precincts to make it easier to set an open space requirement.

Planning for housing targets has long-term implications for the demand, distribution and quality of open space. Changes in demographics, housing types, and the scale and density of housing growth need to be considered at both the municipal and suburb level. Recent State planning reforms have significantly reduced private open space requirements. It is important to understand how these changes may affect demand for public open space and how our open space needs will evolve over time.

Structure Planning work in key growth areas including Boronia, Bayswater and Knox Central have identified open space improvements. The Boronia Renewal Strategy 2024, Bayswater Renewal Strategy 2024 and the Knox Central Land Use Plan 2024 identify opportunities to:

- Provide links and improve permeability to open space

- Protect remnant vegetation
- Provide spaces with shade in summer and excellent solar access in winter
- Integrate water sensitive urban design.

Currently 77% of dwellings are within 400m of open space. However, as housing growth continues in the incremental infill areas, consideration must be given to improving open space, identifying gaps and connections for open space in these areas.

In Knox, further considerations should be given to:

- improving access and connections to open space for employment areas
- improving open space amenity, particularly access to sporting facilities.

Council is currently undertaking a review of its existing open space Strategy. The outcomes and recommendations of this Strategy may have planning implications.

Administrative

An audit of each local policies and schedules in the Planning Scheme has been completed, comparing their drafting and application against the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes, a Practitioners' Guide to Victorian Planning Schemes and relevant planning practice notes. The findings of the audit area contained in Appendix 1. Some changes can be undertaken as part of an Amendment to implement the findings of the Planning Scheme Review, other changes will require further strategic work to be undertaken.

Findings and Recommendations

Knox's limited public transport is a key challenge in supporting future housing and employment growth. Council will continue to advocate for improvements to reduce car dependency and improve liveability in Knox. Heritage planning and the inclusion of Traditional Owners and First Peoples will be incorporated more broadly as part of other projects. Future housing growth will increase demand for open space, making access to quality open space which increasingly important. Administrative planning scheme updates are needed to address audit findings.

The following tasks are recommended to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Knox Planning Scheme:

- Undertake administrative planning scheme amendments as recommended by the Planning Scheme Audit.

Findings

The Planning Scheme Review has found that the Knox Planning Scheme is operating effectively. Opportunities to ensure the Scheme remains contemporary in response to State Government planning reforms have been identified through the Housing Strategy and Activity Centres Strategy. Further improvements to the Planning Scheme efficiency and effectiveness can also be achieved by progressing the landslip and debris flow susceptibility study, updating flood mapping, and reviewing the Vegetation Protection Overlay and Environmental Significance Overlays. It is expected that the State Government will continue to introduce further planning reforms, which will require Council to respond. It is likely that the State Government will make changes to the Ministerial Direction on Form and Content, which will require Council to review and update local provisions.

Table 3 sets out the recommendations and priorities arising from this Review. Projects expected to have the greatest impact on improving the Knox Planning Scheme have been assigned the highest priority. The intended timing for commencement is as follows:

- high-priority tasks commence within the next 1–2 years
- medium-priority tasks commence within the next 2–3 years
- low-priority tasks commence within the next 4 years

Table 3: Recommendations and priorities arising from this Review

Residential	Priority	Budget
1. Prepare a new Knox Housing Strategy which: a) Provides a range of housing opportunities across the municipality to meet the 2051 housing target, informed by HCAP. b) Identify areas for substantial change with good access to jobs, public transport and community facilities, as well as areas for incremental and minimal change where environmental constraints and landscape significance apply. c) Explore options to support greater housing diversity in Knox. d) Review existing neighbourhood character policies in the local planning policy framework. e) Investigate opportunities to improve environmentally sustainable development outcomes in residential development. f) Review strategic investigation sites currently identified in the Knox Planning Scheme. g) Investigate models for an Infrastructure Contribution Plan system to support a growing population. h) Consider the findings of the review of the Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027.	High	Existing Budget

Economic Development	Priority	Budget
2. Continue to collaborate with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council to progress the Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan.	High	Existing Budget
3. Progress the review of the Land for Business Strategy and industrial policy in the Knox Planning Scheme to inform an evaluation of the zones and overlays on business centres.	Medium	To be funded through operating budget
4. Prepare an Activity Centres Strategy to identify the role and function of each activity centre and confirm classifications in accordance with Plan for Victoria and prioritise future strategic work.	Medium	To be funded through operating budget
5. Continue progressing strategic work to support a planning scheme amendment for the rezoning of the Knox Central Precinct, 'Heart of Knox'.	Medium	Existing Budget
6. Complete Amendment C204knox to implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	Existing Budget
Environmental and Rural	**Priority**	**Budget**
7. Undertake a detailed assessment for landslide and debris flow susceptibility in Knox and a planning scheme amendment to introduce the Erosion Management Overlay for affected areas.	High	Existing Budget
8. Continue partnering with Melbourne Water to implement updated flood maps and planning controls in the Knox Planning Scheme.	High	To be funded through operating budget
9. Continue to progress Amendment C196knox to fix anomalies in the Vegetation Protection Overlay 2.	High	Existing Budget
10. Undertake further work to increase vegetation protection on private land.	High	Not yet funded
11. Undertake a planning scheme amendment to implement the findings of the Sites of Biological Significance Study, Volumes 1 and 2, 3rd edition to update the Environmental Significance Overlay.	Medium	Not yet funded
12. Undertake further work to better protect productive agricultural land in the Knox Planning Scheme.	Low	Not yet funded
13. Investigate the ongoing viability of rural residential areas and identify any development opportunities that would not adversely affect their rural and landscape character.	Low	Not yet funded
14. Investigate the potential rezoning of 33–35 Napoleon Road, Lysterfield to fix anomalies in the zoning of the land.	Low	Not yet funded

Administrative Changes	Priority	Budget
15. Undertake administrative planning scheme amendments as recommended by the Planning Scheme Audit.	High	To be funded through operating budget

Advocacy	Priority
Advocate for better design outcomes through the deem to comply requirements to the State Government.	High
Advocate for the extension of the Route 75 from Vermont South to Knox City Shopping Centre.	High
Advocate for a trackless tram or light rail connection from Caulfield or Oakleigh to Rowville	High

Implementation

The recommendations from this Planning Scheme Review Report 2026 will be considered as part of the work program for City Strategy and Planning over the next 4 years. Some changes will be implemented through a Planning Scheme Amendment following the completion of this report. Other changes will require further strategic work. Given the limited resources work has been prioritised and grouped together to maximise efficiency of future strategic projects.

Monitoring and Review

Council will need to continually monitor the impact of State Government planning reforms, particularly the Better Decisions Made Faster Bill 2025, and assess the impact on the effectiveness of the Knox Planning Scheme. These reforms will require significant changes to the systems and processes for planning permit applications. Council will need to monitor the implementation to identify and be proactive responding to localised challenges. The implications for strategic planning processes are not yet known.

In 2030, at the conclusion of the Planning Scheme Review period, we will assess the implementation of the recommendations from the Review 2026. However, the report will be reviewed regularly as part of the strategic planning work program.

Appendix 1

Knox Planning Scheme Audit

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

Clause no and name	Compliance or changes required	Action
Word count (5000 or less)	Complies with word count. Approximately 4986 words.	• **PSR complies**
02.01 Context	Update economic and population data, currently refers to 2016 Census data.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
02.02 Vision	Update to reflect 2025 Council plan vision as follows: • Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
02.03 Strategic directions		
02.03-1 Settlement	Update retail hierarchy to identify Housing Choice and Station Activity Centres as per Plan for Victoria. Further strategic work needs to be undertaken to confirm neighbourhood activity centres role and function.	• **Policy neutral amendment** • **PSR Further strategic work**
02.03-2 Environmental values and landscapes	Complies, not change required.	• **PSR Complies**
02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity	Identify landslip risk and debris flow. Remove reference to licensed premises. • Licensed premises bring important economic, social and cultural benefits to Knox. However, they can also have detrimental amenity and public safety impacts. • Limit social harm from the cumulative impact of packaged liquor outlet	• **PSR Further strategic work to be undertaken as part of landslip risk project** • **Policy neutral amendment**
02.03-4 Natural resource management	Complies, not change required.	• **PSR Complies**
02.05 Built environment and heritage	• To be reviewed as part of Housing Strategy	• **Further strategic work required**
02.03-6 Housing	To be reviewed as part of Housing Strategy.	• **Further strategic work required**

Clause no and name	Compliance or changes required	Action
02.03-7 Economic development	To be reviewed as part of the Land for Business Review.	• **Further strategic work required**
02.03-8 Transport	Complies, not change required.	• **PSR Complies**
02.03-9 Infrastructure	Complies, not change required.	• **PSR Complies**
2.04 Strategic framework plans		
Strategic Framework Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability. Review Strategic Investigation Sites. Do we need to show local roads? Should be readable at A4 scale.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Housing Framework Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Integrated Transport Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability. Plan is blurry.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Environmental and Landscape Values Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Economic Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability. Review activity centre classifications. Review Strategic Investigation Sites.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Environmental Risks Plan	Review and update for clarity and readability.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Planning Policy Framework

Clause no. and name	Changes required	Action
SETTLEMENT		
11.01-1L-01 Settlement	Update reference to activity centres.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
11.03-1L Activity Centres	Requires review for inconsistencies with State Planning policies. Will be reviewed as part of the Activity Centre Strategy. Update terms including reference to Major Activity Centres and activity centre structure.	• **Further strategic work**
11.03-1L Knox Central Major Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Major Activity Centres.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required	Action
11.03-1L Boronia Major Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Major Activity Centres.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
11.03-1L Bayswater Major Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Major Activity Centres. Review for clarity and inconsistencies with State Planning Policy.	• **Policy neutral amendment** • **Further strategic work**
11.03-1L Rowville Major Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Major Activity Centres. Review for clarity and inconsistencies with State Planning Policy	• **Policy neutral amendment** • **Further strategic work**
11.03-1L Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Neighbourhood Activity Centre.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
11.03-1L Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre	Update terms including reference to Neighbourhood Activity Centre.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
ENVIRONMENT VALUES AND LANDSCAPES		
12.01-1L Protection of biodiversity	Clarify are the areas mapped in the ESO different to the Environmental and Landscape Values Plan Strategic Plan?	• **PSR Complies**
12.03-1L Creek Corridors	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
12.05-2L Landscapes, boulevards and gateways	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
12.05-2L Dandenong Foothills	No changes required	• **PSR Complies**
ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND AMENITY		
13.02-1L Bushfire Planning	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
13.07-1L Land use compatibility	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
13.07-1L Closed landfills	Review best practice guidelines for closed landfills.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
13.07-1L Non-residential use and development in residential areas	Review for clarity and inconsistencies with State Planning Policy.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
13.07-1L Licensed Premises	A planning permit is no longer required for licensed premises. This policy is no longer applicable to planning permit applications and should be removed.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required	Action
BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE		
15.010-1L Urban Design	Review policy, some unclear wording and some duplication with State planning policies including Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-2S Clause 55, Clause 57 and 58, and zone provisions.	• **Initially a policy neutral amendment, then further strategic work will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy**
15.010-1L Urban Design on residentially zoned land	Review policy, some unclear wording and some duplication with State planning policies including Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-2S Clause 55, Clause 57 and 58, and zone provisions. Further review will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.	• **Initially a Policy neutral amendment, then further strategic work will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy**
15.010-1L Urban design for residential land use and development in the Commercial 1 Zone	Review policy, some unclear wording and some duplication with State planning policies including Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-2S Clause 55, Clause 57 and 58, and zone provisions. Further review will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.	• **Initially a policy neutral amendment, then further strategic work will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy**
15.010-1L Urban design in Industrial Zones and Commercial 2 Zones	Review policy, some unclear wording and some duplication with State planning policies including Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-2S, Clause 55, Clause 57 and 58, and zone provisions. Further review will be undertaken as part of the Land for Business.	• **Initially a policy neutral amendment, then further strategic work will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy**
15.010-1L Signs	Review policy some unclear wording and some duplication with State Planning Policies including Clause 52.03 Signs.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
15.010- 2L Accessible design	This policy should be removed following the introduction of The National Construction Code introduced the Liveable Housing Standards on 1 May 2024.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
15.01-2L Environmentally Sustainable Development	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
15.01-2L Urban Heat Island Reduction	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
15.01-4L Healthy neighbourhoods	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**

Clause no. and name	Changes required	Action
15.01-5L Neighbourhood Character	Review policy, some unclear wording and some duplication with State planning policies including Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-2S Clause 55, Clause 57 and 58, and zone provisions. Further review will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.	• **Initially a policy neutral amendment, then further strategic work will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy**
HOUSING		
16.01-1L Housing supply	Review for consistent with State Planning policy for housing growth. This will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.	• **PSR further strategic work**
16.01-5L Residential aged care facilities	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
17.01-1L Diversified economy	Review for ambiguous wording and policy conflicts with zone provisions.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
TRANSPORT		
18.01-1L Land use and transport planning	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
18.01-3L Sustainable personal transport	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
INFRASTRUCTURE		
19.02-1L Health Facilities	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
19.02-2L Education facilities	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
19.02-4L Social and cultural infrastructure	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
19.03-2L Infrastructure design and provisions	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**
19.03-3l Integrated Water Management	No changes required.	• **PSR Complies**

Zone analysis

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
RESIDENTIAL ZONES		
32.04S1 Mixed Use Zone Knox Mixed Use Areas.	Contains no content. Consider developing objectives.	• **Complies**
32.04S2 Mixed Use Zone Neighbourhood Activity Centre and Medium Density Precinct	No changed required.	• **Complies**
32.04S3 Mixed Use Zone Northern Precinct	No changed required.	• **Complies**
32.07S1 Residential Growth Zone	Develop design objectives.	• **Further strategic work required as part of the Housing Strategy**
32.07S2 Residential Growth Zone Bayswater and Boronia Activity Centre	Develop design objectives.	• **Further strategic work required as part of the Housing Strategy**
32.07S3 Residential Growth Zone – Other Sites Affected by A Design and Development Overlay or Development Plan Overlay	Develop design objectives. Application requirements seek to demonstrate how the proposal will be accessible to people with limited ability, for five dwellings or more. This requirement can be removed because it covered by the Building Regulations.	• **Further strategic work required as part of the Housing Strategy**
32.08 S1 General Residential Zone, Strategic Sites (Wantirna Health Precinct) and Residential Development Sites Affected by a Design and Development Overlay and Development Plan Overlay	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.08 S2 General Residential Zone Local Living Areas	Develop neighbourhood character objectives. Application requirements seek to demonstrate how the proposal will be accessible to people with limited ability, for five dwellings or more. This requirement can be removed because it covered by the Building Regulations.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.08 S3 General Residential Zone	Develop neighbourhood character objectives. Rename activity centre in	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
Bayswater and Boronia Major Activity Centre	accordance with Plan for Victoria classification. Application requirements seek to demonstrate how the proposal will be accessible to people with limited ability, for five dwellings or more. This requirement can be removed because it covered by the Building Regulations.	
32.08 S7 General Residential Zone Jenkins Orchard	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.08 S7 General Residential Zone Stamford Park	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment.**
32.09 S1 Neighbourhood Residential Zone Bush Suburban – Dandenong Foothills	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S2 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – 1221 and 1223 Mountain Highway, The Basin	Further develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S3 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Inclusionary Housing Pilot – 40 Mount View Road, Boronia	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S4 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Knox Neighbourhood Areas	Develop neighbourhood character objectives. Update Requirements for Clause 54 and 55, in relation to front fence requirements. Streets in a Transport Zoe 2: 2 metres.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S5 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Bush Suburban Areas (Outside the Dandenong Foothills)	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S5 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Ferntree Gully Village	Develop neighbourhood character objectives.	• **PSR policy neutral amendment**
32.09 S9 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Transition Area	Update schedule to refer to Transport Zone rather than Road Zone.	• **PSR policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
32.09 S7 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Norvel Estate	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
INDUSTRIAL ZONES		
33.01S1 Industrial 1 Zone	No content.	• **PSR complies**
COMMERCIAL ZONES		
34.01 S1 Commercial Zone	No content.	• **PSR complies**
34.02 S1 Commercial 2 Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
RURAL ZONES		
35.03 S1 Rural Living	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
35.02 S1 Green Wedge Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
35.02 S2 Green Wedge Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
35.06 S1 Rural Conservation Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
35.06 S2 Rural Conservation Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
35.07 S1 Farming Zone	No changed required.	• **PSR complies**
PUBLIC USE ZONES		
36.01 S Public Use Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
36.02S1 Public Park and Recreation Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
36.03 S1 Public Conservation and Resource Zone	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONES		
37.01S1 Special Use Zone – Community, Recreation, Education and Religious Purposes	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
37.01S2 Special Use Zone – Earth and Energy Resources Industry	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
37.01 S3 Special Use Zone Terminal Station	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
37.02 S1 Comprehensive Development Zone – Waterford Valley Comprehensive Development Plan	Revise purpose to contain a maximum of 5 objectives.	• **PSR policy neutral amendment**
37.02 S2 Comprehensive Development Zone – Burwood Highway and Scoresby Road Knoxfield	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
37.02 S3 Comprehensive Development Zone – Wantirna Health Precinct West Comprehensive Development Plan	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
37.03 S1 Urban Floodway Zone	No content.	• **PSR complies**

Overlay analysis

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE OVERLAYS		
42.01S2 Environmental Significance Overlay – Sites of Biological Significance	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 1.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.01S3 Environmental Significance Overlay – Dandenong Ranges Buffer	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 1.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.02 S1 Vegetation Protection Overlay – Remnant Overstorey Vegetation – Five metres or more	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. Review application requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
42.02 S2 Vegetation Protection Overlay – Significant Exotic and Non Indigenous Native Trees	Currently being updated as part of Amendment C196knox. Review application requirements.	• **PSR Further strategic work**
42.02 S3 Vegetation Protection Overlay – Remnant Overstorey Vegetation – Eight (8) metres in height or more	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents. Review application requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.02 S4 Vegetation Protection Overlay – Canopy Tree Protection	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents. Review application requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.03 S1 Significant Landscape Overlay – Lysterfield Valley and Lysterfield Hills Rural Landscape	Clarify wording for permit requirements. Review application requirements for vegetation removal.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.03 S2 Significant Landscape Overlay – Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area	The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents. Review application requirements for vegetation removal. Clarify wording for permit requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.03 S3 Significant Landscape Overlay – Dandenong Foothills: Lower Slope and Valley Area	Clarify wording for permit requirements. Review application requirements for vegetation removal.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.03 S4 Significant Landscape Overlay – The Basin Rural Landscape	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. Review application requirements for vegetation removal.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
42.03 S5 Significant Landscape Overlay – Lysterfield Urban/ Rural Transition and Lysterfield Valley Contributory Area	Clarify wording for permit requirements. Review application requirements for vegetation removal.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
42.03 S6 Significant Landscape Overlay – Dandenong Foothills – Former Ferntree Gully Quarry	Review application requirements for vegetation removal.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
HERITAGE AND BUILT FORM OVERLAYS		
43.01 S1 Heritage Overlay	No changes required.	• **PSR complies.**
43.02 S1 Design and Development Overlay – Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area	Develop Decision Guidelines. Develop Application Requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S2 Design and Development Overlay – Dandenong Foothills: Lower Slope and Valley Area	Develop Decision Guidelines. Develop Application Requirements.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S3 Design and Development Overlay – Lysterfield Urban/ Rural Transition and Lysterfield Valley Contributory Area	Develop Decision Guidelines.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S4 Design and Development Overlay – Dandenong Foothills – Former Ferntree Gully Quarry	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S5 Design and Development Overlay – Dandenong Foothills – Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Central Area	Develop Decision Guidelines.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
43.02 S6 Design and Development Overlay – Bayswater Major Activity Centre	Update name to reflect current activity centre classifications. The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S8 Design and Development Overlay – Ferntree Gully Village	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains references to Clause 21.10 Local Areas and Clause 21.10-6 Ferntree Gully Village, which should be updated. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S9 Design and Development Overlay – Rowville Activity Centre Residential Opportunity Sites	The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S10 Design and Development Overlay – Boronia Major Activity Centre	Update name to reflect current activity centre classifications.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S11 Design and Development Overlay – The Basin and Alchester Village Neighbourhood Activity	Update the name to 'The Basin and Alchester Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre'. The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents. Remove reference to 'proposed' built form controls.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.02 S12 Design and Development Overlay – Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre	The schedule contains lots of objectives, and the Ministerial Direction of Form and Content allows for only 5. The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents.	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
	Remove reference to 'proposed built form controls'.	
43.02 S12 Design and Development Overlay – Knox Central Activity Centre	No changes required.	• **PSR complies.**
43.04 S2 Development Plan Overlay - Knox Central Commercial Core Precinct	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S3 Development Plan Overlay	Include a name in the Title. Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S4 Development Plan Overlay – Wellington Village Shopping Centre	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S5 Development Plan Overlay – Scoresby Rowville Employment Precinct	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S7 Development Plan Overlay – Lot 10 Henderson Road, Rowville	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S8 Development Plan Overlay – Redevelopment of Austral Bricks Site, 525 Stud Road, Scoresby	No changes required.	• **PSR complies**
43.04 S9 Development Plan Overlay – Stamford Park	The schedule contains Background Documents which should be listed under Clause 72.08 Background Documents. Develop objectives from the Masterplan	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S10 Development Plan Overlay	Include a name in the Title. Develop objectives	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S11 Development Plan Overlay – Knox Private Hospital Expansion	No changes required.	• **PSR complies.**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
43.04 S12 Development Plan Overlay – Rowville Commercial Core Including Stud Park Shopping Centre	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S13 Development Plan Overlay – Kingston Links Development Plan	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S14 Development Plan Overlay – Inclusionary Housing Pilot – 40 Mount View Road, Boronia	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S15 Development Plan Overlay – 56 Kingloch Parade, Wantirna	Develop objectives.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
43.04 S16 Development Plan Overlay – 191 George Street, Wantirna South Development Plan	No changes required.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
LAND MANAGEMENT OVERLAYS		
44.03 S Floodway Overlay	No content.	
44.04 S Land Subject to Inundation Overlay	Develop objectives and decisions guidelines.	• **Further strategic work to be undertaken as part of the Flooding Project with Melbourne Water.**
44.05 S Special Building Overlay	Develop flood management objectives and decision guidelines.	• **Further strategic work to be undertaken as part of the Flooding Project with Melbourne Water.**
44.06 S1 – Bushfire Management Overlay - Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Lysterfield, Rowville, The Basin – Bal 12.5	No changes required.	• **Complies**
44.06 S2 Bushfire management Overlay – Boronia, Ferntree Gully, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully – BAL 29 Areas	No changes required.	• **Complies**

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	Action
OTHER OVERLAYS		
44.08 S1 Buffer Area Overlay – Materials Recovery Centre – Buffer Management Area	No changes required.	• **Complies**
45.01 S Public Acquisition Overlay	Review the application of the Public Acquisition Overlay over Bateman Street Bushland Reserve, Wantirna.	• **PSR further strategic work**
45.05 S Restructure Overlay	No changes required.	• **Complies**
45.12 S Specific Control Overlay	Remove Site Specific Control – 27 Reservoir Cres, Rowville .	• **Policy neutral amendment**

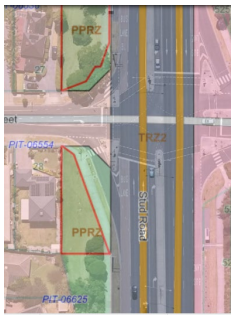
Particular provisions analysis

Clause no. and name	Is it applied? Changes required (if relevant)	Action
51.01s Specific sites and inclusions	No changes required.	• **Complies**
52.02s Easements, restrictions, and reserves	No content.	
52.05s Signs	No content.	
52.16s Native vegetation precinct plan	No content.	
52.17s Native vegetation	No changes required.	• **Complies**
52.28s Gaming	No changes required.	• **Complies**
52.32s Wind energy facility	No content.	
52.33 Post boxes and drystone walls	No content.	
53.01s Public open space contributions and subdivision.	No changes required.	• **Complies**
53.06s Live music entertainment venues	No content.	

Clause no. and name	Is it applied? Changes required (if relevant)	Action
53.15s Statement of underlying provisions	No content.	
59.15s Local VicSmart applications	No content.	
Schedule 1 to Clause 59.16 Information requirements and decision guidelines for local VicSmart applications	No content.	

Operational provisions analysis

ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THIS SCHEME			
72.01s	Schedule to Responsible Authority for this Planning Scheme	No changes required.	• **Complies**
72.02s	Schedule to What Area is Covered by this Planning Scheme?	No changes required.	• **Complies**
72.03s	Schedule to What Does this Scheme Consist of?	No changes required.	• **Complies**
72.04s	Schedule to Documents Incorporated in this Planning Scheme	Remove reference to Small Lot Housing Code, August 2014 - C160.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
72.08s	Schedule to Background Documents	Remove Reference to the following: • Knox Council Plan 2021-2025 • Knox Liquor Licensing Accord 2015-2017 (Knox City Council 2015) • Knox Play Space Plan 2013-2023	• **Policy neutral amendment**
STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION			
74.01s	Schedule to Application of Zones, Overlays and Provisions	No changes required.	

ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THIS SCHEME			
74.02s	Schedule to further strategic work	Update as per the Background Report • Undertake a Study to identify landslip and debris flow susceptibility.	• **Policy neutral amendment**
Mapping	Cnr Stud Road & Mockridge Street (land next to 612R Stud Rd, Wantirna South)	Rezone land from PPRZ to NRZ4. 	• **Policy neutral amendment**

Knox Planning Scheme Review

Background Report



2026

knox

Knox City Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Knox City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the City of Knox, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

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Appendix 1

Department of Transport and Planning

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Mr Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer
Knox City Council
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South VIC 3152

Email: jodie.saisanas@knox.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Dobson

KNOX PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C191knox

I am writing to advise you that I have decided, under delegation from the Minister for Planning, to exercise the power under section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to prepare, adopt and approve Amendment C191knox to the Knox Planning Scheme, exempt from notice requirements.

The Amendment replaces the Local Planning Policy Framework of the Knox Planning Scheme with a new Municipal Planning Strategy at Clause 02, a modified Planning Policy Framework at Clauses 11-19 and a selected number of local schedules to zones, overlays and operational provisions in a manner consistent with changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions introduced by Amendment VC148 and the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

Public notice is not warranted as the amendment does not introduce any provisions or requirements that did not already exist in the Knox Planning Scheme. The amendment simply refines, restructures or relocates existing policy provisions.

This amendment forms part of the suite of reforms undertaken through the Smart Planning Program led by the former Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). I would like to take this opportunity to convey our appreciation for the council's support and the valuable input council officers provided to the department during the preparation and review of the amendment.

The following changes have been made to the amendment from the version endorsed by Knox City Council on 28 February 2022:

1. Deletion of content that repeats state, regional or other local content, including zone and overlay controls and particular provisions, and content that conflicts with the VPP or state policy.
2. Deletion of new content translated from existing structure plans, as it is not considered to be policy neutral. New content introduced from existing structure plans has been removed from the following clauses:
    - Clause 11.03-1L Knox Central Major Activity Centre
    - Clause 11.03-1L Rowville Major Activity Centre
    - Clause 11.03-1L Ferntree Gully Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre
    - Clause 11.03-1L Upper Ferntree Gully Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre.

    This content should be introduced through a separate planning scheme amendment.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be protected under the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. It will only be used or disclosed to appropriate Ministerial, Statutory Authority, or departmental staff in regard to the purpose for which it was provided, unless required or authorised by law. Enquiries about access to information about you held by the Department should be directed to foi.unit@delwp.vic.gov.au or FOI Unit, Department of Transport and Planning, GPO Box 3292, East Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

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Knox City Council

3. Deletion of the 'Movement policy guidelines' from Clause 11.03-1L Boronia Major Activity Centre. The guidelines conflict with the car parking requirements at Clause 52.06 Car parking.
4. Deletion of strategies relating to equitable development from Clause 15.01-1L Urban design for residential land use and development in the Commercial 1 Zone. State planning policy does not support providing for the development potential of neighbouring properties and equitable development is not something that is provided for in the VPP.
5. Deletion of strategies that seek to prescribe mandatory requirements or minor rewording to 'encourage' or 'support' these outcomes, consistent with the planning scheme rules outlined in the *Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes*. Local policy is not a control and cannot impose strict or mandatory requirements (for example, a maximum building height) or 'require' certain outcomes.
6. Deletion of the following local policies, which duplicate state policy and do not contain any local direction for decision making:
    - Clause 13.01-1L Natural hazards and climate change
    - Clause 13.03-1L Floodplain management
    - Clause 15.01-3L Subdivision design.
7. Deletion of background documents listed in the Schedule to Clause 72.08 for the following reasons:
    - The document does not meet the definition of a background document – for example, a council plan.
    - The document has already been referenced by the VPP.
    - The document has been since become redundant or has been superseded.
    - The document was not translated from the existing scheme.
8. Deletion of a decision guideline from schedules 1, 2 and 3 to Clause 42.03 (Significant Landscape Overlay) as it duplicates local content in Clause 12.05-2L Dandenong foothills. The most suitable location for this content is in the local policy as a policy guideline.
9. Relocation of Clause 15.02-1L (Urban heat island reduction) to Clause 15.01-2L, consistent with the PPF changes implemented by Amendment VC216.
10. Relocation of the Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) policy under Clause 15.01-2L (Building design), consistent with the PPF changes implemented by Amendment VC216, and reinstatement of the standard DTP preferred wording for ESD policy.
11. Minor drafting change to the commencement provision in Clause 15.01-2L (Environmentally sustainable development) to retain the existing transitional provision as follows: '*This policy does not apply to applications received by the responsible authority before the gazettal date of Amendment C150*'.
12. Relocation and renaming of Clause 16.02-1L (Location of Residential Development) to Clause 16.01-1L (Housing supply), consistent with the PPF changes implemented by Amendment VC169.
13. Relocation of Clause 18.02-1L (Sustainable transport) to Clause 18.01-3L (Sustainable transport), consistent with the PPF changes implemented by VC204.
14. Sunset provisions with an expiry date of three years from the date of gazettal have been applied to the following local policies:
    - Clause 13.07-1L Non-residential use and development in residential areas
    - Clause 15.01-1L Urban design on residentially zoned land

- Clause 15.01-1L Urban design for residential land use and development in the Commercial 1 Zone
- Clause 15.01-5L Neighbourhood character
- Clause 15.01-1L Signs.

The explanatory report accompanying the amendment outlines the reasons behind the application of the sunset provisions and what action is necessary to resolve the issues.

15. Formatting, rewording and administrative corrections to the ordinance to ensure consistency with the *Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes* and the planning scheme rules outlined in the *Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes*.

Due to the limitations of a policy neutral translation and the need to progress the PPF translation to ensure the Knox Planning Scheme can operate in the correct structure, it is highly recommended that the following matters are considered in council's future strategic work program and next planning scheme review:

- Review local policy to:
  - Clarify ambiguous wording
  - Remove outdated language and terminology and ensure alignment with planning scheme terms at Clause 73 and Plan Melbourne 2017-2050.
  - Delete duplication with state and local policy, including state and local provisions in zones, overlays and particular provisions.
  - Ensure that local objectives are only included in the planning scheme if they expand on a state or regional objective, and provide a particular local emphasis or distinction.
- Review Clause 17.01-1L Diversified economy in accordance with the drafting advice outlined in the Practitioner's Guide, noting the following matters for consideration:
  - Clarifying ambiguous content by using more directive wording in place of terms like 'high-quality', 'high amenity' 'business land focus', 'employment' and 'non-employment' uses, and 'high generating employment and high economic output uses'.
  - Updating or removing content that conflicts with zone requirements. For example, the policy discourages restricted retail use in Scoresby-Rowville-Knoxfield and Bayswater Business Precinct, except in Commercial 1 zoned land. However, a permit is not required for restricted retail in the Commercial 2 Zone.
- Review Clause 13.07-1L Closed landfills to ensure the policy guidelines and policy document contain the most up-to-date guidance for implementing buffer distances, noting that the Practitioner's Guide advises that naming external documents that are regularly updated should be avoided where possible.
- Review the drafting of Design and Development Overlay schedules to ensure compliance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes. For example, DDO4, DDO7, DDO8, DDO11 and DDO12 contain more than 5 design objectives, which is not compliant with this direction.
- Review the Environmental and Landscape Overlay schedules and Development Plan Overlay schedules to remove the sub-heading 'Background documents' as it is not compliant with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes. Clause references are listed in the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background documents).

- Review and update strategic framework plans to ensure that any policy with a direct link to land identified on a map can be clearly identified by the planning scheme user. For example, the Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 does not adequately identify 'rural and green wedge' land, which is referred to in policy at Clause 11.01-1L Settlement.

The amendment will come into effect when notice of its approval is published in the *Victoria Government Gazette*.

If you would like further information, please contact Melena McKaskill, Manager South East, Metropolitan Planning Services, on email melena.mckaskill@transport.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Alison McFarlane
Director, Metropolitan Planning Services

21 / 02 / 2025

Appendix 2

The data referenced throughout this chapter has been drawn from Knox City Council records, State Government Planning Permit Activity Reporting and the Knox Housing Monitoring Report 2026. The method by which this data is collected and reported is different. This has resulted in discrepancies, especially in the reported number of planning permit applications, number of dwellings, number of VCAT decisions and types of applications. The data should be read as contextual evidence to support the analysis, rather than as a definitive count of decisions or application types.

Demographic trends

Population

The Knox population has grown by an estimated 3,467 residents since the 2016 Census. The current Knox population is estimated at 163,820, as of June 2025 (id. Consulting 2025). This represents an average increase of 385 residents per year between that time period, indicating a relatively low growth rate, when compared to other metropolitan councils.

The median individual age in Knox is 40 years, compared with 38 years in Greater Melbourne. The percentage of the population aged 60 years and over is 24%. The percentage of residents which have children (aged 0 to 17 years) in Knox is 21%. The greatest growth has been in senior residents aged between 70 and 84 years, since the 2016 Census.

In 2021, 1,022 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in Knox. This represents the second largest population of First Nations people in Melbourne's eastern metropolitan area.

In Knox, 48% of households are families with one or more children. Approximately 21% of households are lone person, and 11% of households are older couples without children. The number of lone person households is expected to continue to grow.

Language diversity

Approximately one third of Knox residents (29%) speak a language other than English at home. The most common languages, other than English, include Mandarin, Cantonese, Sinhalese, Greek and Hindi.

Dwellings

There has been an increase in separate dwellings from 2016 to 2021 of 1,592 dwellings. This includes an increase in medium density dwellings of 1,180 and 489 high density dwellings. In Knox, 17% of dwellings are medium density, 82% are separate houses, and 1.6% are high density dwellings.

The Knox Planning Scheme currently refers to data from the 2016 Census. The information in this report has been taken from the latest Census in 2021, which is more recent. Further changes are likely to be evident following the release of the 2026 Census. Following the release of data from the 2026 Census it is recommended that updates are made to population and employment data in Clause 02.01.

Planning Permit Applications and Appeals

Since the 2023 Planning Scheme Review, there has been a gradual increase in the number of planning permit applications received. This has occurred alongside a significant increase in the total number of dwellings approved within those applications.

The increase in planning permit application numbers in 2025 are likely to be due to recent State planning reforms, particularly the introduction of 'deemed to comply' provisions that streamline the permit process. There has also been new vegetation control reforms that trigger a planning permit for the removal, destruction or lopping of a canopy tree. Appeals lodged in relation to Council's decisions have declined consistently which has positive resourcing and budget implications.

Table 1 shows various planning application data, which has been extracted from the Department of Transport and Planning's planning permit activity reporting data.

Table 1: Planning application trends, Knox

Year	Permit issued (new and amended)	Applications received	Total dwellings (permit issued)	Appeals lodged
2023	595	787	424	24
2024	556	822	433	16
2025	570	850	735	10

Source: Department of Transport and Planning

Figure 1 shows the greatest number of applications has been for medium density housing, across 2024 and 2025. This has been accompanied by subdivision applications. There has also been a noticeable increase in the number of applications for vegetation removal.

The majority of applications (75%) were decided within statutory timeframes in 2025, within 60 statutory days for regular applications and 10 statutory days for VicSmart applications. On average, regular applications were determined in 46 statutory days (or 106 gross days), while VicSmart applications were determined in 4 business days.

The total estimated cost of works for applications lodged in 2025 was just under $390 million, a 1 per cent increase from $386 million in 2024. This included 68 applications valued between $1 million and $10 million, and 20 applications valued at more than $10 million. Overall, the cost of works data indicates a stable number of higher-value projects.

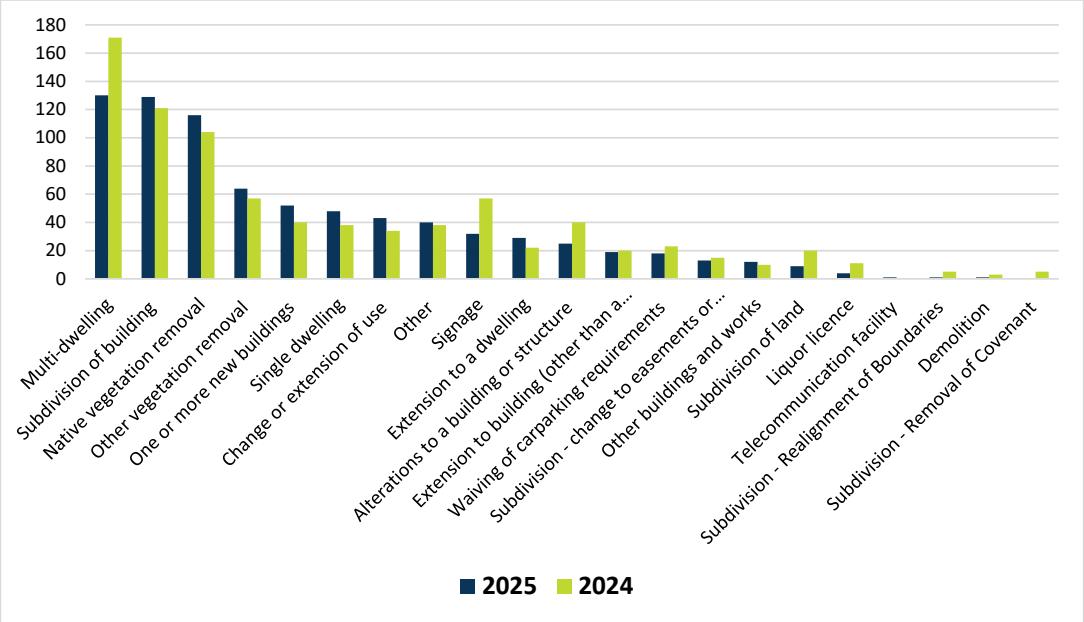


Figure 1: Planning Permits Issued by Category, 2024 and 2025
Source: Department of Transport and Planning, Planning Permit Activity Reporting

Housing Monitoring

Council produces an annual report tracking changes in residential development across the municipality, with reporting beginning in 2014. Relevant key trends from the 2025 Housing Monitoring Report include:

Housing Supply and Delivery

- A significant increase in net dwellings, with planning permits accounting for 599 net new dwellings in 2025, representing an 80% increase from 2024 (333).
- A decline in building approvals in 2025 (670), previously 2024 (869).

Strategic Alignment and Growth Patterns

- In 2025, 85% of net new dwellings approved were large dwellings (≥3 bedrooms). Over the past decade, the average has been 73% large dwellings, while 82.1% of existing dwellings already fall into this category.
- Only nine apartments were approved in 2025, a decline from 39 in 2024 and 59 in 2023.
- An average of 77% of all approved applications were consistent with the housing character area objectives in the 2015 Housing Strategy.

Specialised Housing and Location Outcomes

- In 2025, Knox slightly exceeded the national benchmark of 78 residential aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 years and over, improving on 2024 when the municipality only met the minimum benchmark. However, provision remains close to the minimum, indicating limited capacity to meet future demand.

- In 2025, 70% of net new dwellings were in “car-dependent” areas, up from 28% in 2024 and 2023 and 24% in 2022. This is likely to increase reliance on cars, reduce access to services and jobs, and undermine strategic objectives.

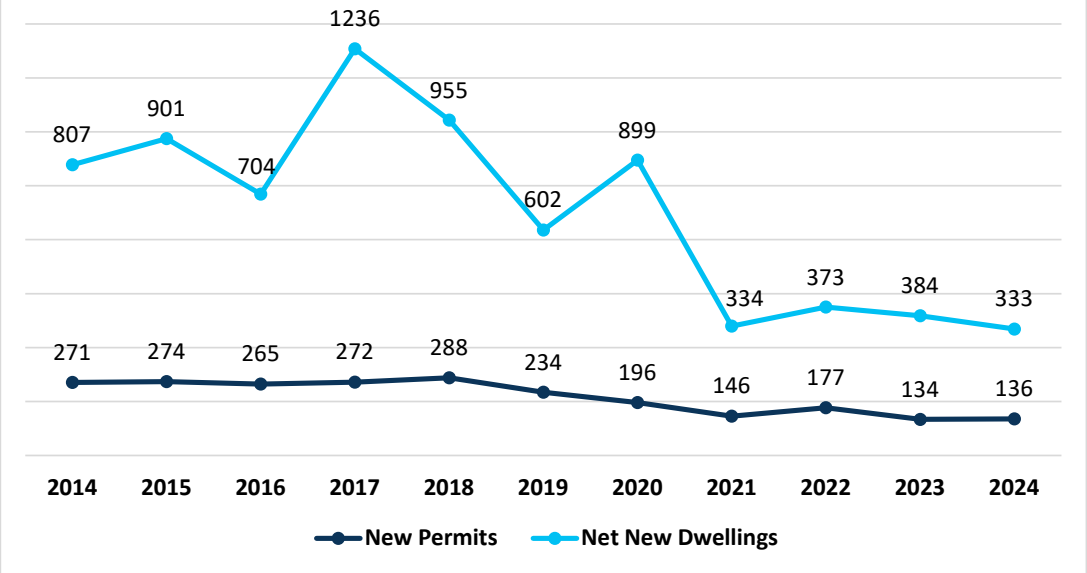


Figure 2: Approved planning permits for a multi dwelling development and possible net growth in dwellings
Source: Knox Housing Monitoring Report 2025

Figure 2 illustrates the potential number of net new dwellings that could be constructed each year, accounting for the demolition of existing homes. Notably, when compared with Knox’s housing target of 43,000 new homes, the ‘net new dwellings’ figures are extremely low, as approximately 1,654 dwellings would need to be delivered each year from 2025 onwards to meet this target. While changes to the Knox Planning Scheme can influence development, it is important to acknowledge that there are other factors that influence housing provision in Victoria such as rising construction and labour costs, interest rates, cost of finance and taxation settings.

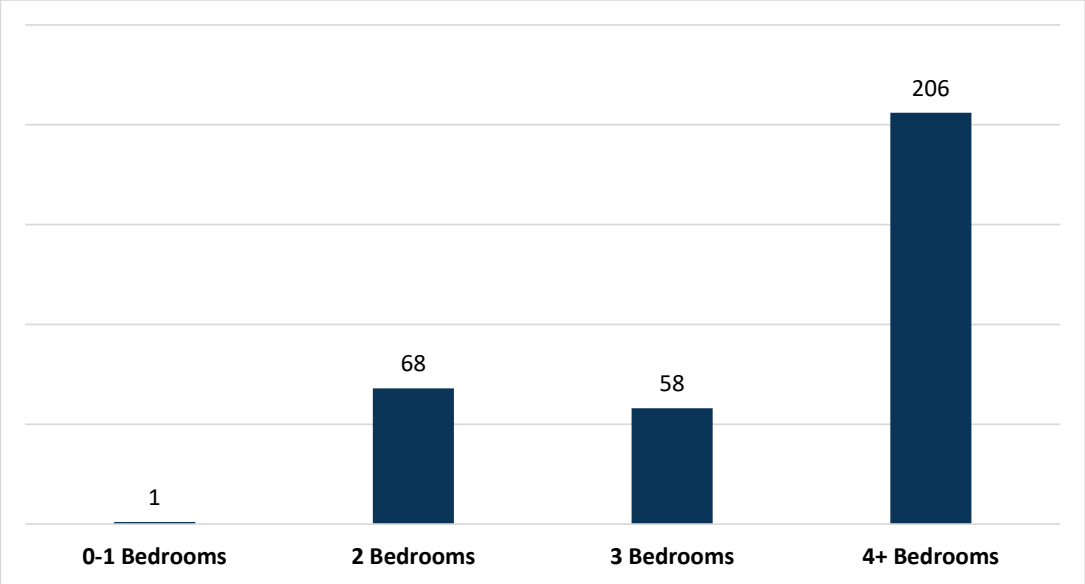


Figure 3: Net change in bedrooms from approved 2024 single and multi-dwelling planning permits after accounting for bedrooms lost through demolition
Source: Knox Housing Monitoring Report 2025

Figure 3 highlights that most approved dwellings contain four or more bedrooms. This has been a trend since 2020. In contrast, in 2019, the largest share of approvals were two-bedroom dwellings (223 dwellings) closely followed by dwellings with four or more bedrooms (218 dwellings). Studios and one-bedroom dwellings have consistently remained low in number.

The Housing Monitoring Report highlights the trends for increasing the number of dwellings and reinforce the importance of directing housing growth towards well serviced areas with public transport and infrastructure. It also recognises the need to support the delivery of smaller dwellings to provide a greater diversity of housing choice.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Planning Panels Victoria (PPV)

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decisions and Planning Panels Victoria reports considering planning scheme amendments offer useful insights into the effectiveness of the Knox Planning Scheme through independent review and decision-making. In several cases, VCAT has highlighted the strength of Council's neighbourhood character policies whilst also identifying gaps in the neighbourhood character objectives of the schedules to the residential zones. Council monitors the rate and nature of appeals to VCAT to identify whether policy is being interpreted in a way which is in keeping with Council's objectives. A summary of key VCAT decisions and Planning Panel reports is provided below, and particular policy issues are under the key theme chapters.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Decisions

There have been 44 decisions by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) since the last Planning Scheme Review (August 2023 to December 2025). Table 2 shows the number of decisions decreased in 2025, when compared to 2024 based on Council records.

Table 2: Number of VCAT Decisions

Year	Number of VCAT Decisions
2023 (August to December inclusive)	6
2024	22
2025	16
TOTAL	**44**

Source: Knox City Council records

The low number of VCAT appeals is an indication that Council officers are effectively negotiating with applicants, the Planning Scheme is relatively clear and Council's expectations are realistic. VCAT adds considerable time and cost to determining applications. However, increasing discrepancies between State and local policies, and less time to negotiate outcomes may contribute to more refusals and appeals in the future.

Table 3: VCAT Appeal Types

Nature of Appeal	2023 (August to December)	2024	2025
Medium Density Housing	4	4	3
Signs		1	2
Telecommunication Facility		2	
Place of Assembly		1	
Rooming House			1
Residential Aged Care		1	
Shed associated with a dwelling			
Other	2		
TOTAL	**6**	**9**	**6**

Source: Knox City Council records

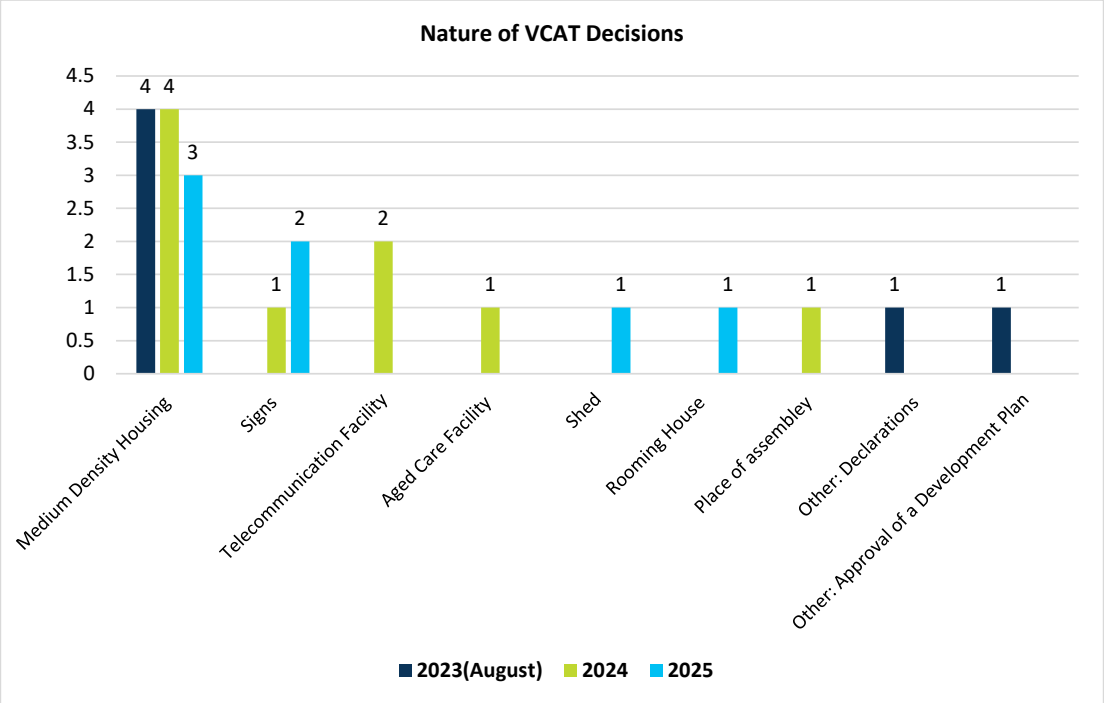


Figure 4: Nature of VCAT Decisions by Category
Sourced: Knox City Council records

The majority of VCAT appeals in Knox are against applications which have been refused. The low number of appeals against Council failing to make a decision indicates Council's delegations and decision-making framework are operating effectively. The majority of VCAT applications are for medium density housing. These applications generally relate to the density of development and ability to meet standards. There have also been appeals for signs and telecommunication facilities.

Table 4: Summary of the Nature of VCAT Appeals

Year	Cases	S.77: appeal against refusal	S.79: appeal against failure to grant	S.80: appeal against conditions	S.82: Appeal against issue of permit
2023	24	16	2	3	3
2024	16	10	1	3	2
2025	10	7	1	1	1

Source: Knox City Council records

Key decisions from VCAT since August 2023 are identified below as well as any decisions which identified policy issues.

Media Circus (VIC) Pty Ltd V Knox CC [2024] VCAT 1033 (28 October 2024)

In Media Circus (VIC) Pty Ltd V Knox CC [2024] VCAT 1033 (28 October 2024) the Tribunal supported Council's decision to refuse to grant a planning permit for an electronic major promotion sky sign. The Tribunal found that "…[t]he signage is not integrated with the design of the building, rather, it sits above the roofline in line and will be backdropped in many views by sky not existing vegetation or buildings. It will be a large, dominant sky-line element, even more so at night from multiple directions in the public realm."

Faith Box Hill Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2025] VCAT 953 (29 October 2025)

In Faith Box Hill Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2025] VCAT 953 (29 October 2025) the decision of the Council was set aside and an amended planning permit issued for the construction of building and works, and vegetation removal associated with a rooming house.

Telstra Corporation Limited v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 74

In Telstra Corporation Limited v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 74 the applicant sought approval to construct a telecommunications facility which included a 36.4 metre high structure. Although no permit was required for the use itself, the land is located in the Green Wedge Zone - Schedule 1 and is subject to multiple overlays. The Tribunal upheld Knox Council's decision to refuse to grant a permit, concluding that the benefits of an upgraded telecommunications facility did not outweigh the negative impacts of introducing such a structure into a highly sensitive landscape.

Planning Vision Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 48

In Planning Vision Pty Ltd v Knox CC [2024] VCAT 48 the applicant sought approval to use the site for a Place of Assembly alongside an as-of-right storage/warehouse use, as well as to obtain a partial waiver of car parking requirements within the Industrial 1 Zone. Council refused the proposal on the basis that it did not align with the purposes of the zone or relevant planning policy; however, the Tribunal ultimately issued a permit. Accordingly, this decision may influence how similar matters are assessed in future hearings.

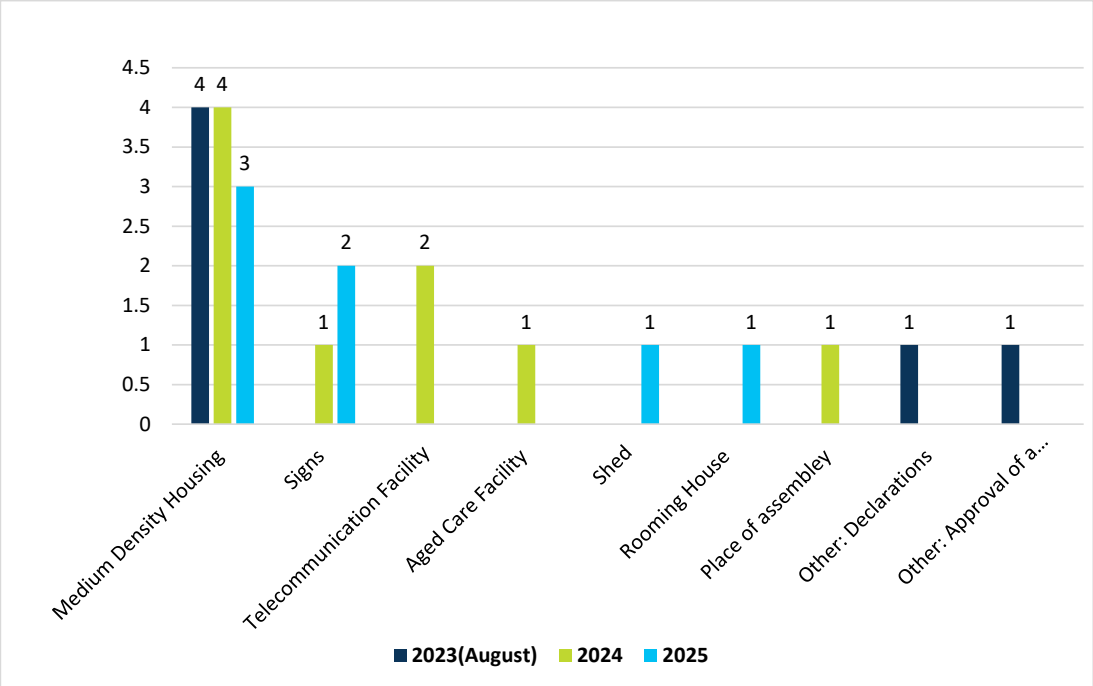


Figure 5: Nature of VCAT Decisions

It is still too early to conclusively identify emerging trends from the recent major planning reforms. However, the low number of Section 79 (failure to determine) appeals is a positive sign that statutory timeframes are being met. Most matters before VCAT continue to be Section 77 (against refusal) appeals,

with medium-density housing remaining the most common subject. VCAT has also recognised the strength of Knox's local neighbourhood character policies, while identifying gaps in the neighbourhood character objectives within the residential zone schedules.

Planning Panels Victoria

The key learnings from reports published by Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) since August 2023 are identified below.

Amendment C189knox - Rezoning of properties within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone

Amendment C189knox rezoned more than 30 properties in Rowville from the Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 4 to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 9 (NRZ9), creating a built-form transition to adjoining Low Density Residential Zone land. The amendment introduced variations to the NRZ9. However, following the gazettal of the townhouse and low-rise code amendment VC267, all NRZ9 schedule variations (except for fencing) were removed as part of Amendment VC282.

This area will be reviewed as part of the Housing Strategy.

Amendment C192knox – Implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy

Amendment C192knox updated the planning controls and boundary for the Boronia Activity Centre to reflect the Boronia Renewal Strategy 2021. There was strong opposition over a proposed 10 storey limit on gateway sites within the centre, however, following the Panel, Council resolved to support the proposed 10 storey limit and the recommendations of the Panel.

Amendment C194knox – Boral Quarry Development Plan, Mirvac

Amendment C194knox updates planning controls to 191 George Street, Wantirna South, to facilitate the delivery of housing (including affordable housing), commercial and retail uses as well as the provision of open space. The Priority Project Standing Advisory Committee addressed matters including bushfire and flooding risks, geotechnical issues, and access and traffic movement. Development Plan Overlay 16 requires a contribution of equal to 3% of the development costs to be made for affordable housing.

Appendix 3: Detailed Actions Audit

The table below sets out an audit of each action including high, medium and low priority actions.

Table 5: Detailed actions audit, Planning Scheme Review 2023

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
HIGH PRIORITY		
R1	Adopt the report as the review required pursuant to section 12B (1) of the Planning & Environment Act 1987.	**Completed** The Planning Scheme Review was adopted on 28 August 2023.
R2	Forward the report to the Minister for Planning as required by section 12B (5) of the Planning & Environment Act 1987.	**Completed** The 2023 Review was forwarded to the Minister for Planning on 21 September 2023.
R3	Commence a review of the Knox Housing Strategy	**Underway** The Review of the Knox Housing Strategy was paused due to the roll out of State Government Planning Reforms. However, work has recommenced.
R4	Following approval of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) translation, undertake a review of the PPF and impact of the translation of Clause 22.07 policy into Local Planning Policy.	**Completed** The former Clause 22.07 - Development in Residential Areas and Neighbourhood Character, was translated into Clause 15.01-1L - Urban design on residentially zoned land, Clause 15.01-2L - Accessible design, Clause 15.01-5L - Neighbourhood character, Clause 16.01-1L - Housing supply and Clause 16.01-5L - Residential aged care facilities. Several of these clauses require further review due to sunset clauses included at gazettal of Amendment C191knox.
R5	Investigate a review of the vegetation protection controls in the planning scheme.	**Underway** A three-stage project was developed to undertake work. Stage 1 is progressing via Amendment C196knox. Stages 2 and 3 have been placed on hold pending the development of an urban tree management framework.
R6	Work in partnership with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils and the State government on the Bayswater Business Precinct.	**Underway** Work is progressing on a draft structure plan, in collaboration with Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council.
R7	Review the heritage study business case, to recognise and protect Aboriginal and post European settlement heritage, including reviewing the 1993 Knox Heritage Study, and investigate funding opportunities to progress the business	**To be rescoped** This project has not received budget approval. This project is to be rescoped to be undertaken in collaboration with Connected Communities as part of other work.

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
	case.	
R8	Update Council's flood modelling across Knox. Complete Flood Mapping and Modelling Study of the municipality and implement through a planning scheme amendment to revise or introduce the application of overlays and potential rezoning of land.	**On hold** Council has been working with Melbourne Water to update local flood maps. The project has experienced delays in modelling and implementation with Melbourne Water.
R9	Continue to partner in the Elevating ESD Targets project and support progression of the amendment. Investigate alternative options should the amendment not be supported by the Minister for Planning.	**On hold** Following the recent State Planning reforms and completion of the ESD Roadmap, this Amendment continues to be under consideration and may not ultimately be authorised by the Minister for Planning.
R10	Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal program.	**Completed** Amendment C192knox, gazetted in March 2025, updated planning policy for the Boronia Activity Centre. An implementation plan has been prepared and audit has been undertaken.
R11	Finalise and implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy as the structure plan for the Bayswater Activity Centre, including incorporating the relevant recommendations into the Knox Planning Scheme.	**Underway** The Bayswater Renewal Strategy was adopted by Council on 26 August 2024. Following its adoption, officers prepared draft Amendment C204knox to incorporate the recommendations into the Knox Planning Scheme. The amendment is currently awaiting authorisation.
R12	Continue to collaborate with the State government partners to facilitate the development of the Wantirna Health Precinct.	**Completed** Amendment C185knox was gazetted on 30 August 2024 for the Wantirna Health Precinct West Comprehensive Development Plan.
R13	Progress implementation of the Knox Central program.	**Underway** The 'Heart of Knox' project is a program of ongoing work to underpin development of 9ha of Council owned land in the Knox Central Activity Centre.
R14	Facilitate the implementation of the adopted Social and Affordable Housing Strategy through the Planning Scheme and other strategic planning projects.	**Ongoing** Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027 is currently under review by Community Strengthening. Contributions for affordable housing will continue to be negotiated between Council and property owners developing key sites.

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
MEDIUM PRIORITY		
R15	Review current policy regarding neighbourhood activity centres in the Knox Planning Scheme and scope any further strategic work required.	**Underway** The Planning Scheme at a local level provides limited guidance on neighbourhood activity centres. Work has been foreshadowed to commence a Knox Activity Centres Strategy in 2027/28.
R16	Review the Transport and Infrastructure Local Planning Policy in the Knox Planning Scheme in light of transport-related State Government reforms and to reflect local transport plans and policies adopted by Knox, in consultation with the Traffic and Transport team.	**Completed** A review of local policies was undertaken as part of the Planning Policy Framework translation.
R17	Review public and shared housing reforms and Residential Aged Care Facilities policy changes and the impacts of this policy change on built form to be considered in the next Knox Housing Strategy Review.	**Completed** The Residential Aged Care Facilities and Public and Shared Housing Policy have been reviewed, and no further work is required.
R18	Review Accessible design policy in the Knox Planning Scheme and the Accessibility Guidelines for Residential Developments.	**No longer required** The National Construction Code Liveable Housing Standards commenced on 1 May 2024, introducing mandatory minimum accessibility standards for new homes and apartments to meet the needs of older persons and those with mobility limitations. Therefore, the Accessible Design policy is no longer required.
R19	Review the reformed Residential Zones and ResCode reforms under the Performance Assessment Model - to be considered in next Knox Housing Strategy review.	**Underway** The Residential zones will be considered as part of the Knox Housing Strategy project. No further action is required.
R20	Review the Knox Land for Business Directions Plan and Clause 22.02 Employment Land policy.	**Underway** This work item will be delivered through the Knox Land for Business Review project, which will update the Knox Land for Business Directions Plan and review Clause 22.02 (now Clause 15.01-1L - Urban design in Industrial Zones and Commercial 2 Zone land).
R21	Investigate opportunities to incorporate Climate Response Plan strategies into processes and policies and the Knox Planning Scheme.	**Underway** Recent State Government reforms have removed Council's ability to vary landscaping requirements in residential zone schedules. Council is currently undertaking a joint flood mapping project with Melbourne Water.

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
		Council is investigating landslide risk and potential debris flow hazards across the municipality, which may result in a future planning scheme amendment.
LOW PRIORITY		
R22	Incorporate relevant recommendations into Knox Planning Scheme should Council adopt the draft Biodiversity Resilience Plan.	**Outstanding** Knox Council has adopted the Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 in January 2024. This work has been placed on hold pending the State Government changes to native vegetation removal and tree canopy requirements.
R23	Investigate how findings from the integrated Major Infrastructure Development Plan (if adopted) can inform the Knox Planning Scheme.	**No longer required** This project sits with Active and Creative Communities who advised that the project did not progress. No further action is required.
R24	Prepare a planning scheme amendment to 'fix up' previously identified anomalies in the Knox Planning Scheme.	**Underway** Administrative and minor 'fix-up' errors within the Planning Scheme continue to be identified and addressed on an ongoing basis. Since the last review, one fix-up amendment has progressed (C196knox).
R25	Investigate the effectiveness of Bush Boulevards Policy in the Knox Planning Scheme	**Completed** A review of Clause 12.05-2L - Landscapes, boulevards and gateways, has been found to deliver sound outcomes for Bush Boulevard areas especially for commercial and industrial land and should be retained. Further work to reinforce these characteristics will be undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.
R26	Undertake a review of the "Further strategic work" items in the Knox Planning Scheme.	**Completed** A review of the schedule to Clause 74.02 has been completed. Refer to Appendix 3 of this report.
R27	Leverage recognition of Bayswater as a regionally significant industrial precinct.	**Underway** The Bayswater Business Precinct Structure Plan is being developed in partnership between Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils. This item forms part of Economic Development's ongoing work and does not need to be carried forward into this Review's recommendations.
R28	Continue to advocate for all priority transport projects, including the Knox Tram, Rowville Rail and improved bus services.	**Completed** Council continually advocates to the State and Federal Government for transport improvements. This recommendation forms part of Traffic & Transport's ongoing business

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
		rather than improvements to the Planning Scheme. Accordingly, it does not need to be carried forward into this Review's recommendations.
R29	Continue to monitor any changes to the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and if relevant, inform affected parties.	**Completed** The Bushfire Management Overlay is reviewed twice a year by the Department of Transport and Planning. Council will be notified of any proposed changes and, where necessary, will inform affected parties.
R30	Continue to support, where applicable, the ongoing development of Strategic Investigation Sites in accordance with associated Development Plans.	**Completed** Council can support development through its decision making on applications. The Strategic Investigations Sites identified in the 2015 Housing Strategy have been approved for development. The Housing Strategy Review may identify new sites. It is recommended that this item be removed from Clause 74.02.
R31	Monitor how the new Buffer Area Overlay will be implemented to deal with conflicting land uses, for any implications/opportunities for Knox.	**Underway** Amendment C194knox, gazetted on 6 March 2026, implements the Buffer Area Overlay - Schedule 1 to part of 191 George Street, Wantirna South. The panel report from the hearing provides useful information on the application of the overlay.
R32	Monitor impact of Windfall Gains Tax and provide ongoing advice regarding Council owned land.	**Ongoing** Council monitors the impact of Windfall Gains Tax. No changes are required to the Planning Scheme as a result.
R33	Ongoing recognition and promotion of the Eastern Region Land Use Framework Plan.	**No longer required** The release of Plan for Victoria has meant that the Eastern Region Land Use Framework Plan is no longer required.
R34	Monitor impact of Rural Workers Accommodation through Statutory Planning.	**Completed** This recommendation relates to Amendment VC202, gazetted 12 October 2021, which enables and supports the provision of rural worker accommodation in the Farming Zone.
R35	Ensure community safety is considered in the preparation of any structure plans.	**Ongoing** Safety was a consideration as part of the Boral Quarry Amendment and Bayswater Renewal Strategy. Safety is addressed within PPN58: Structure Planning for Activity Centres, which also cites best-practice guidance such as the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017).
R36	Monitor the effectiveness of tree planting for development sites in accordance with	**Outstanding** Broad scale tree canopy monitoring will be

REFERENCE NUMBER	Recommendation	Officer Comments
	endorsed Landscape Plans.	undertaken as part of the Knox Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024–2034. Council has recently invested in a tree canopy mapping tool which will monitor tree canopy coverage. Detailed monitoring of landscape plans endorsed as part of planning permit application has not commenced and requires considerable resourcing.
R37	Place greater focus when assessing all planning applications on reducing impact of natural hazards.	**Underway** The Knox Planning Scheme gives consideration to natural hazards including flood and fire. Further work is being undertaken to identify landslip susceptibility.

Strategic Work Already identified by Council

The following is an audit of the list of further strategic work identified in the schedule to Cl.74.02:

Further Strategic Work	Status
Assess the productivity (including potential food production) and economy of agricultural land in rural and green wedge areas and apply appropriate schedules to zones leverage off these findings.	**Partially Completed** This work was undertaken through Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (December 2023). Further work will be required to investigate how to understand how this can be implemented into the Planning Scheme.
Provide strategic directions for land use and development on rural and green wedge land that consider aesthetic, biodiversity, landscape, amenity, cultural and agricultural values.	**Partially Completed** The Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (December 2023) addresses most aspects of this work item.
Review planning strategies and zoning in the area surrounding the Dandenong Valley Parklands to ensure consistency with the objectives for development of the park.	**Outstanding** The parklands are no longer subject to the Dandenong Valley Parklands Future Directions Plan (June 2006), which had a lifespan of 10 to 15 years. It is recommended this work be undertaken.
Develop a masterplan for Lewis Park and the Blind Creek Corridor.	**Completed** A masterplan was endorsed by Knox Council in March 2019. It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Cl.74.02.
Prepare a local area plan for the Burwood Highway East Corridor.	**No longer required.** This work item is no longer warranted as the Burwood Highway East Corridor is subject to recommended and

Further Strategic Work	Status
	planned strategic work, including structure planning for Mountain Gate Activity Centre, the development of a Knox Activity Centres Network Strategy and Land for Business Review project. It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Prepare and implement a new Heritage Study for Knox, to provide a comprehensive record of historic, social and culturally significant places and areas, including Aboriginal cultural heritage.	**Not commenced** This project did not received budget and therefore it is recommended it be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Investigate the application of Development Contributions Plan Overlays for Activity Centres, Strategic Investigation Sites and other areas to contribute towards the cost of service and infrastructure improvements needed to support additionally generated population.	**Completed** This work formed Amendment C186knox. The amendment was withdrawn by officers following a Council resolution dated 28 August 2023. It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Prepare and implement structure plans or built form guidelines for smaller Activity Centres in the Dandenong Foothills and centres that do not have locally specific guidance to address future housing needs.	**No longer required.** Priorities for activity centre planning is changing following the State Government planning reforms. This work will be prioritised as part of the Activity Centre Strategy. It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Investigate inclusion of land for employment purposes as part of an integrated redevelopment proposal at 191 George Street, Wantirna South (Boral Quarry) Strategic Investigation Site.	**Completed** This work stems from the Knox Land for Business Directions Plan (December 2018), noting that a mixed-use precinct is identified in the draft Stage 1 Development Plan. As Amendment C194knox has been approved by the Minister for Planning, the precinct is expected to form part of a later stage (previously considered by Council). It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Cl.74.02.
Investigate possible inclusion of land for employment purposes at the Stud Road frontage within any redevelopment of the Waverley Golf Club (and adjoining sites on Stud Road) Strategic Investigation Site.	**Completed** This work arises from the Knox Land for Business Directions Plan (December 2018). Council received a request for in-principle support for a proposal to amend the urban growth boundary (UGB) to enable development of the land. On 11 June 2024, Council resolved to defer its position on the proposal and noted that the proponent may ask the Minister for Planning to prepare and consider the amendment. Given the State Government's current

Further Strategic Work	Status
	commitment to a permanent UGB, any updated Knox Land for Business Directions Plan should remove this requirement. It is therefore recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Develop and implement a Wantirna Health Precinct Structure Plan and other strategic planning and investment guidance.	**Completed** The Wantirna Health Precinct West Comprehensive Development Plan was approved by the Minister for Planning and gazetted on 30 August 2024 under Amendment C185knox. It is recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Review the Bayswater Activity Centre Structure Plan and associated planning controls to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain relevant to decision-making.	**Completed** On 26 August 2024, Council adopted a new plan – Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024). Changes to planning controls are currently being processed under associated planning scheme amendment C204knox. It is recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Develop precinct parking plans to support implementation of the Knox Integrated Transport Plan, 2015-2025.	**No longer required.** Funding is not currently available to develop precinct parking plans. However, parking management plans have been developed for Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully and Wantirna, with Mountain Gate and Rowville scheduled to be reviewed next. These actions will be reviewed as part of the Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025. Therefore it is recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Develop and implement a Green Travel Plan policy to sustainably managing movement in and around high trip generating sites.	**No longer required.** This work item originates from the Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025 (KITP). This action has not been progressed because due to a lack of funding. Given this action sits outside the Knox Planning Scheme it is recommend that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Update Special Building Overlays based on the results of Melbourne Water mapping and the Knox Flood Mapping and Modelling Project.	**Underway** Council has been working with Melbourne Water to update local flood maps. Council has completed its flood study, and Melbourne Water has advised that its mapping is expected to be completed by December 2027. In the interim, noting the December 2027 timeframe, Council is exploring designating under the Building Regulations 2018.

Further Strategic Work	Status
Develop comprehensive local and regional flood modelling and mapping to identify appropriate flood overlay and supporting planning controls for flood affected areas.	**Redundant** This item is covered by the comments above.
Identify opportunities to accommodate a range of future housing, retail and employment uses in Strategic Investigation Sites	**Completed** This work has been undertaken as part of the Knox Housing Strategy (January 2015) and Knox Land for Business (December 2018). It is recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.
Plan for potential residential development in the Knox Central Major Activity Centre Future Residential Precinct.	**No longer required.** The Knox Central Structure Plan (October 2017) identifies precincts designated for 'future residential' use. Because the land is not owned by Council, it has no ability to influence the timing or likelihood of development. Accordingly, it is recommended that this task be removed from the schedule to Clause 74.02.

Recommendations

- Update Clause 74.02 to reflect current and relevant tasks.

Appendix 4: Policy Context

Victoria's Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead – 2024 – 2034

In September 2023, the State Government released Victoria's Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead – 2024 – 2034 (Housing Statement). At a high level, this document highlights that Melbourne is set to become Australia's biggest city by the end of the decade and that there is a national housing affordability crisis. To ease acute pressure and meet long term demand, there is a need to boost supply by around 80,000 homes a year (or 2.24 million homes by 2051). To facilitate this, the Housing Statement prefaced a range of initiatives that were to come, including a new plan for Victoria and introduction of local government housing targets.

Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria released February 2025, supersedes Plan Melbourne 2017-2050. Plan for Victoria sets a state-wide vision for how Victoria will grow over time. The plan identifies five pillars:

- Self-determination and caring for Country
- Housing for all Victorians
- Accessible jobs and services
- Great places, suburbs and towns
- Sustainable environments

The aim of the plan is to deliver more homes, more jobs and great communities. To achieve this, the plan sets out 22 actions including the following:

Action	Outcome
Action 1: Implement housing targets for every local government	The zones and overlays in planning schemes will be adjusted to ensure there are enough realisable development opportunities for 2.24 million homes in well-serviced locations, freeing up the development industry to deliver the homes we need.
Action 2: Implement new planning controls to streamline planning in activity centres	The introduction of new planning controls in and around the 60 identified Activity Centres will unlock supply for 360,000 new homes in well-located areas close to services and jobs, along train and tram lines across Melbourne.
Action 4: Increase the number of social and affordable homes	The affordability of homes in new development and the amount of dedicated social housing will become explicit matters considered in the in the planning system when changing planning schemes or considering development applications.
Action 12: Protect and enhance our canopy trees	Infrastructure designers and managers and planning decision makers will need to consider how to include more canopy trees in urban areas so that these areas increase canopy cover to 30 per cent to deliver significant health and well-being benefits.

Action	Outcome
Action 18: Improve the environmental sustainability of development	Apartments will be more comfortable with reduced environment footprints.
Action 19: Better communicate and manage flood, bushfire and climate hazard risks	Fewer homes will be built in high risk areas without being designed to be resilient to the risk, and people will understand better the risks they face.

Housing Capacity Assessment Platform (HCAP) and Access To Opportunities and Services (ATOS)

HCAP is a planning tool that has been developed by the Department of Transport and Planning. It is an interactive platform similar to VicPlan and is currently only accessible by the government sector, with access provided to Council in March 2026. HCAP estimates the theoretical capacity for housing in a planning scheme if every site was developed to its absolute maximum, then provides discounts. The platform also enables councils to test the impact of proposed rezonings on housing capacity.

State Government Amendments

Key state planning scheme amendments that have occurred since the 2023 review, which impact Knox are outlined below.

Amendments
Expansion of the Development Facilitation Program
Amendment VC242, gazetted 20 September 2023 introduced two new particular provisions (Clause 53.22 - Significant Economic Development & Clause 53.23 - Significant Residential Development with Affordable Housing) which seeks to facilitate developments that provide a significant level of housing. The development may include affordable housing, or make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy, and provide substantial public benefit, including new jobs. The Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for development to which Clause 53.22 and Clause 53.23 apply. An example of this, Minister for Planning issued a planning permit under Clause 53.22 Significant Economic Development the for 4 warehouses be developed at 1061 Mountain Highway, Boronia.
Small second homes
Amendment VC253, gazetted 14 December 2023 facilitates the delivery of housing in Victoria by making a small second dwelling with a gross floor area of 60 square metres or less, exempt from requiring a planning permit in most residential and rural zones if specified requirements are met.
New zones and overlay
Amendment VC257, gazetted 25 February 2025 introduced changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to introduce Clause 32.10 - Housing Choice and Transport Zone and Clause 43.06 - Built Form Overlay to support housing growth in and around activity centres and other well-serviced locations in line with Victorias Housing Statement, The Decade Ahead 2024-2034.
Amendment VC274, gazetted 28 February 2025 introduced a new Precinct Zone at Clause 37. The zone is a special purpose zone that provides a framework for the implementation of strategic work (such as structure plans) in priority precincts.
Townhouse and low-rise code
Amendment VC267, gazetted 31 March 2025 introduced a 'deemed to comply' assessment pathway to boost housing construction to meet the housing needs of Victoria. In particular, the amendment modified the provisions of Clause 55 Two or More Dwellings on a Lot and Residential Buildings (one to 3 storeys) and inserted a new Clause 57 Two or More Dwellings on a Lot and Residential Buildings of Four Storeys. The Amendment also removed the ability to specify local variations in Clause 55 standards for landscaping, permeability, side and rear setbacks, and walls on boundaries. Critically, ground level private open space requirements have been reduced from 40sqm to 25sqm, and consideration of

Amendments

neighbourhood character reduced.

Great Design Fast Track

Amendment VC280, gazetted 7 April 2025 introduced Clause 53.25 - Great Design Fast Track, allowing for an expedited planning pathway for residential developments that contain at least two storeys, no more than eight storeys, and at least eight dwellings. The Minster for Planning is the responsible authority.

Plan for Victoria

Amendment VC283, gazetted 2 September 2025 changed the Victoria Planning Provisions to implement Plan for Victoria (Department of Transport and Planning, 2025), update and introduce policy, remove reference to Plan Melbourne 2017-2050: Metropolitan Planning Strategy and make general drafting improvements and clarifications.

Single home code

Amendment VC282, gazette 8 September 2025 introduced a new Clause 54 - One Dwelling on a Lot or a Small Second Dwelling on a Lot. The Amendment standardised residential development rules to make sure good decisions are made faster by implementing deemed to comply assessment process and new residential development standards.
This Amendment removed ability to specify local variations in clause 54 standards for street setbacks, site coverage and private open space in 16 schedules to the Residential Zones.

Changes to tree controls

Amendment VC289, gazetted 15 September 2025 introduced a planning permit requirement to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree in residential areas under Clause 52.37 Canopy Trees.

Car parking provisions

Amendment VC277, gazetted 18 December 2025 introduced changes to car parking requirements, aligning car parking rates with demand and reduce the number of car parks required in locations well-serviced by public transport. It also introduced a Car Parking Requirements Map, scoring areas based on access to public transport.

Mid-Rise Code

Amendment VC300, gazetted 19 March 2026 implements the Mid-Rise Code to introduce new deemed to comply assessment provisions at Clause 57 for four to six storey residential development in residential zones.

Bushfire Planning Provisions

Amendment VC248, gazetted on 5 May 2026 introduces changes to Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay to improve clarity and increase permit exemptions for dwellings and other buildings. The Amendment also introduces decision guidelines into Clause 53.02 Bushfire Planning.

Legislative Changes

The legislative changes below stem from the release of Victoria's Housing Statement.

Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025
The Housing Statement Reform Act, a 138-page document, was passed by Parliament and received Royal Assent on 18 March 2025. It authorised a suite of changes to planning and rental laws, including significant updates to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act) and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998.

The key changes to the P&E Act are included in the Appendix 4.

Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026
The Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026, a 235-page document, was passed by Parliament and received Royal Assent on 17 February 2026. The Better Decisions Made Faster Act has a commencement date of 29 October 2027 and will introduce changes to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act), Planning and Environment Regulations 2015 (Regulations), Victoria Planning Provisions, Victoria's planning schemes, guidance materials, as well as new Ministerial guidelines.
A summary of key changes to the P&E Act has been included below.

The full impact of these legislative changes will not be understood until the next review. However, it is anticipated Knox Council's statutory (City Planning & Building) and strategic (City Strategy & Planning) planning teams will need to review and update their current processes to ensure they align with the new legislative requirements.

Key changes to the P&E Act

The key changes to the P&E Act are below.

Planning scheme amendment process

- **Section 16C (1) & (4):** When considering a request to prepare an amendment, Council must give written notice of its decision to the person who made the request within 10 business days of making the decision, and a copy of the request and notice must be provided to the Minister for Planning.
- **Section 16G (2):** Once an amendment has been submitted for authorisation, the Minister for Planning cannot require further review if the amendment is prescribed as a low-impact amendment.
- **Section 16H:** If the Minister for Planning does not notify council of a decision on an authorisation request within 10 business days of receiving it, Council may proceed to prepare the amendment without authorisation.
- **Section 16L:** The Minister for Planning may authorise any other Minister or public authority to prepare an amendment to any part of the State standard provisions and local provisions of a planning scheme.
- **Section16N & 23A:** These sections address the new 'low-impact' planning scheme amendment pathway, which is an alternative pathway to the standard planning scheme amendment process. Amendments that form part of a combined planning permit and planning scheme amendment under section 96A(2) are not eligible to use this pathway.
- **Section 27:** Council may apply to the Minister for Planning to be exempted from considering a panel report prior to deciding whether to adopt an amendment, provided certain criteria are met.

- **Sections 158C:** A panel may decide to treat two or more submissions referred to it as if they were one submission if the panel is satisfied that the submissions are the same or substantially the same.
- **Section 158D:** If a panel decides under section 158C to treat two or more submissions as if they were one submission, the persons who made the submissions may nominate a person who made one of the submissions to be the lead submitter for the submissions, with that person's consent.
- **Section 158G:** This section allows a panel to consider submissions on the papers and/or in person.
- **Section 159A:** Panels may direct experts (who have already prepared reports) to hold a "conference of experts" and/or prepare a "joint expert report".

Permit application process

- **Sections 48A to 48D:** These sections relate to incomplete applications, including the issuing of notices, required timeframes, and the outcome if the applicant does not provide the requested information - where the application becomes void and of no effect.
- **Section 52A:** Enables the Minister for Planning to issue guidelines on what constitutes “material detriment”.
- **Section 68:** Extends the life of a planning permit, allowing three years to commence development and five years to complete it (previously two and four years).
- **Section 83AA:** VCAT may treat two or more objectors as a group.
- **Sections 96UA & 96UB:** These sections relate to the metropolitan planning levy, which is a fee payable to the State Revenue Office for developments over a prescribed financial threshold. They allow a person to apply to the Minister for Planning for a levy exemption certificate, including in circumstances where a levy was paid for an earlier planning permit application on the same land and the estimated cost of the new development is not more than 10% greater than the estimated cost of development specified in the levy certificate in respect of the previous permit application.

Planning scheme & amendment processes

- Updates will be made to the objectives of planning in Victoria at Section 4.
- A municipal planning strategy will be required to include a vision statement setting out the long-term vision for the area over the next 30 years, which must be consistent with and further the objectives of planning in Victoria.
- Council must notify any registered Aboriginal Party that may be affected by a proposed amendment. Currently Knox Council notifies the Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria when an amendment may impact aboriginal heritage.
- When a request to prepare an amendment is lodged, Council must maintain a register containing prescribed information and make it publicly available in accordance with public availability requirements. Additionally, Council may request further information from proponents before making a decision on the request, and any written notice must specify a lapse period of at least 90 days, with extensions permitted.
- If the Minister for Planning decides that an application for authorisation to prepare an amendment requires further review, they must complete the review within -
(a) 10 business days for a low-impact amendment; or (b) 20 business days for a medium-impact amendment; or (c) 30 business days for a high-impact amendment.

If further information is required, written notice must be issued with a lapse date (refer to point above). The clock will reset once Council provides further information e.g. for a low-impact assessment, the Minister for Planning will have a further 10 days to complete the review.

- Council will be required to prepare and publish an engagement report for every amendment. While the P&E Act already requires Councils to consider all submissions, which is currently (at Knox Council) addressed through a Council Report and/or a standalone engagement report, the updated requirements specify that the engagement report must also be publicly available until two months after the amendment comes into operation or lapses.
- Council will not be required to refer a submission or comment to a panel if it is - (a) frivolous or vexatious; or (b) wholly irrelevant to the amendment.
- Before making a decision to adopt an amendment or part of it, a Council must be satisfied that the amendment is consistent with – (a) the objectives of planning in Victoria; and (b) any State planning strategy and any applicable regional planning strategy; and (c) any prescribed requirements.

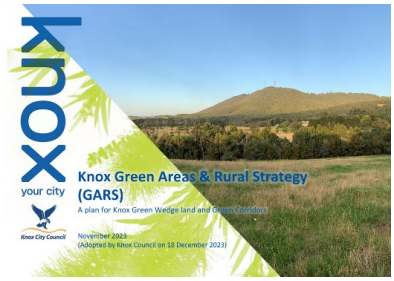
Permit application process

- Council will be able to require an affordable housing contribution as a condition of a planning permit, provided that the relevant planning scheme identifies a need for affordable housing in the area, and the application exceeds a threshold prescribed in the Regulations that is expressed in terms of number of dwellings or value of development. The contribution includes the provision of affordable housing or a monetary contribution.
- Three planning permit assessment streams (type 1, type 2, and type 3 applications) will be introduced. Where a proposal could be more than one type of application (e.g. due to multiple permit triggers), the type of application that applies is the higher numbered application.
- Before making an application for a permit an applicant must give notice to a registered Aboriginal party for a prescribed area if - (a) the land to which the application applies is in the prescribed area; and (b) the application for a permit is of a prescribed class.
- Council may reject an objection - (a) which it considers - (i) has been made primarily to secure or maintain a direct or indirect commercial advantage for the objector; or (ii) is frivolous or vexatious; or (iii) is wholly irrelevant to the grant of the permit following the type 3 application; or (b) that it reasonably believes has been prepared by a third party and not the objector. Parameters around item (b) will be set out in Section 57(2A)(b).
- The Act will provide greater flexibility to remove or vary restrictive covenants through an application for a planning permit.
- When assessing applications for extension of time, Council must consider a set of “tests” which Section 69 currently lacks. The “tests” are similar to those set out Kantor v. Murrindindi Shire Council 18 AATR *285*, which are already considered by Knox Council.

Appendix 5: Strategic Planning Documents

Since the 2023 Review, the following strategies have been adopted:

Green Areas and Rural Strategy (December 2023)



The Green Areas and Rural Strategy was adopted by Council on 18 December 2023. It provides direction for areas that are of environmental, recreational, agricultural, rural living and landscape significance on the fringe of the municipality and outside of the urban growth boundary.

Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019 (Revised 2021)

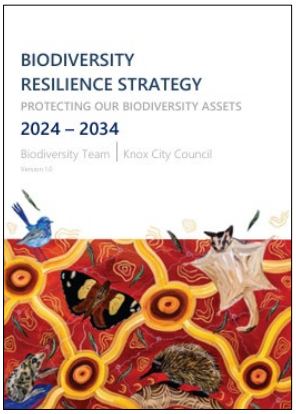


The Boronia Renewal Strategy 2021 was adopted by Council on 27 May 2024. It provides a framework for growth over the next 20 years in the Boronia Activity Centre. The strategy focuses on 5 themes: economic development and investment, land use and built form, movement and access, public spaces, community wellbeing and infrastructure.

Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024)



The Bayswater Renewal Strategy was adopted by Council on 26 August 2024. It seeks to ensure the Bayswater Major Activity Centre continues to be a thriving hub for community life and business.

Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 (January 2024)	
	The Knox Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 was adopted by Council in January 2024. It outlines the current state of biodiversity in Knox, the vision and goals for sustaining biodiversity resilience, a nature positive future and connection to Country over the next 10 years.
Knox Cycling Action Plan 2024-2035	
	The Knox Cycling Action Plan (2024-2035) identifies key operational and capital works priorities to improve cycling in Knox. The Plan is based on 4 key principles of safe cycling, low stress cycling, movement and place, and all abilities and all ages.

Planning Scheme Amendments

Since the 2023 Review, 8 local Council amendments have been approved. Three amendments have been requested, and one has been authorised. These amendments include both Council and Ministerial led amendments and have been summarised below.

Rowville Neighbourhood Residential Zone
Amendment C189knox, gazetted on 28 September 2023 rezoned land in Rowville from the Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 4 to Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 9. It aims to provide a transition in built form between the adjacent Low Density Residential Zone and the suburban residential area. However, the Minister for Planning removed variations in the Schedule to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone in VC267.
Wantirna Health Precinct
Amendment C185knox, gazetted on 30 August 2024 by the Minister for Planning, rezoned the land on Boronia Road, Wantirna to the Comprehensive Development Zone - Schedule 3 and deleted the Vegetation Protection Overlay - Schedule 2 from part of the land to facilitate the Wantirna Health Precinct.

Boronia Activity Centre
Amendment C203knox, gazetted 13 December 2024 extended the expiry date in the Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 7 to 14 March 2025, which applied to the Boronia Activity Centre. The schedule has since been deleted as part of Amendment C192knox (below).
Amendment C192knox, gazetted 13 March 2025, implements the objectives and strategies of the Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019 (revised 2021) into the Knox Planning Scheme by amending the Boronia Major Activity Centre boundary, built form controls, and making other consequential changes to policy, zones and overlays.
The Basin Solar Farm
Amendment C202knox gazetted 24 April 2025 by the Minister for Planning facilitates the use and development of land associated with the Basin Solar Farm, which comprises of a solar energy facility, associated building and works, and vegetation removal, by applying the Specific Controls Overlay and inserting a new Incorporated Document titled The Basin Solar Farm, 49 Basin-Olinda Road, The Basin.
Norvel Quarry Redevelopment
Combined Amendment C184knox & Planning Permit Application P/2020/6049 was gazetted 11 July 2025 rezoned the former Norvel Road quarry to facilitate residential development and the protection of a bushland reserve. A planning permit was issued for the subdivision of land, native vegetation removal and to carry out works.
Eastlink
Gazetted 23 October 2025 applied a Specific Controls Overlay and introduced an Incorporated Document to part of 1500 Eastlink, Scoresby and 1501 Eastlink, Scoresby to enable the existing use of the land to remain lawful.
Boral Quarry Redevelopment
Amendment C194knox by the Minister for Planning was gazetted on 6 March 2026 facilitates the delivery of housing, commercial and retail uses as well as new parkland at 191 George Street, Wantirna South. It also secures 68.17 hectares of rehabilitated parkland as an extension of the Dandenong Valley Parklands.
Elevated Environmentally Sustainable Development
Amendment C197knox, is awaiting authorisation to add a new Elevated Environmentally Sustainable Development Particular Provision under Clause 53. This Amendment request has been coordinated with CASBE, in collaboration with other Councils. Following the recent State Planning reforms and completion of the ESD Roadmap, this Amendment is unlikely to progress.
Bayswater Activity Centre
Amendment C204knox, authorisation has been requested which seeks to introduce a development framework for the Bayswater Major Activity Centre by implementing the Bayswater Renewal Strategy (August 2024) into the Knox Planning Scheme.
Vegetation Protection Overlay
Amendment C196knox has recently finished public exhibition. The Amendment seeks to make corrections to the Vegetation Protection Overlay - Schedule 2 by making changes to the maps to delete properties where trees are no longer present on the land.

Churchill Waverley Golf and Bowls Club
Amendment C157knox was requested in December 2023 to seek in principle support for a proposal to adjust the urban growth boundary to include the Churchill Waverley Golf and Bowls Club. It aims to support residential development and a potential business land component consistent with the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 and Knox Land for Business. The proponent indicated their intention to submit an application to the Minister for Planning, noting that the request revisited discussions first initiated in 2016. At a Council meeting on 11 June 2024, Council acknowledged the proposal but withheld support for any rezoning or redevelopment. Council resolved that a formal position could be determined in the future should the Minister for Planning commence a process to alter the urban growth boundary.

Planning Scheme Reviews

Advisory note, March 2026

Department of Transport and Planning

Section 12B of *the Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) requires a planning authority to regularly review the provisions of the planning scheme.

The purpose of the review is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the planning scheme in achieving the objectives of planning in Victoria, and the objectives of the planning framework established by the Act.

The review must evaluate the planning scheme to ensure that it:

- is consistent with the Ministerial Direction - the Form and Content of Planning Schemes;
- sets out effectively the policy objectives for use and development of land in the area to which the planning scheme applies; and
- makes effective use of State provisions and local provisions to give effect to State and local planning policy objectives.

The review is an audit of the performance of the planning scheme at a point in time and will inform the continuous improvement of the planning scheme.

The review is likely to identify changes or additional strategic work that would improve the performance of the planning scheme. Any proposed improvements to the planning scheme that flow from the review should be carried out as planning scheme amendments separate to the review.

Upon completion of the review, the planning authority must without delay report the findings of the review to the Minister. The outcomes of each council's planning scheme review are due to be reported to the Minister for Planning by the end of October 2026.

The priorities for each planning scheme will depend on local circumstances.

This advisory note sets out the matters recommended by DTP to be addressed in a review undertaken in 2026.

Local policy and planning tools

1. Identify any inconsistencies between local policies and state and regional policies in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) resulting from changes made by Amendment VC283 (*Plan for Victoria*) and other amendments to the PPF since the last planning scheme review.

2. Identify any conflicts between local policies and schedules, and changed state standard provisions, including:
   - clause 52.06 (Car parking) – amended
   - clause 52.27 (Licensed premises) – deleted
   - clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) – new
   - clause 54 (One dwelling on a lot or a small second dwelling on a lot) – amended
   - clause 55 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings) – amended
   - clause 57 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings of four storeys) – amended

Housing and residential development

3. Where DTP has advised that the planning scheme does not currently have capacity to meet its housing target, review residential zones and overlays in consultation with DTP to identify appropriate strategic responses to ensure the planning scheme has sufficient capacity as assessed by DTP's Housing Capacity Assessment Platform.

4. Where DTP has advised that the scheme is likely to have capacity to meet its housing target, review policy, zones and overlays to ensure increased housing is enabled in appropriate locations, particularly where access to opportunities and services is highest.

5. Consider the distribution of housing capacity to meet the greenfield and established area housing targets for growth municipalities and major regional cities (Ballarat, Greater Bendigo and Greater Geelong).

6. Review the application of residential zones considering Planning Practice Note 90 *Planning for Housing* and Planning Practice Note 91 *Using the residential zones*.

7. Review any neighbourhood character policy in the context of the reforms to the residential development provisions.

Settlement boundaries

8. In rural and regional areas, identify settlement boundaries or identify issues to be resolved to establish a settlement boundary.

Green wedges

9. For councils required under Part 3AA of the Act to prepare, adopt and review green wedge management plans (that is, councils with green wedge land), consider the requirements of the *Ministerial Direction on the preparation and content of Green Wedge Management Plans* to ensure plans are in place for all green wedges and existing plans are reviewed and up to date in planning schemes.

Form and content

10. Resolve any inconsistencies in terminology with Plan for Victoria activity centres hierarchy and regional settlement hierarchy.

11. Ensure all schedules align with their relevant schedule template.

12. Review special purpose zones to ensure land use terms are up to date.

Removing roadblocks to improvement

13. Assess whether new *Victoria Planning Provisions* tools would be more appropriate to implement planning objectives. For example, the Built Form Overlay in place of existing overlays or the Precinct Zone in place of the Activity Centre Zone or Special Use Zone.

Environmental risks

14. Identify where mapping of environmental risks should be updated.

Resources

Guide to Council Planning Scheme Reviews available from the Department of Transport and Planning Regional Planning Hub

Practitioner's guide to Victoria's planning schemes

Using Victoria's Planning System

Contacts

Metropolitan Planning Services	
North/West Region	steven.cox@transport.vic.gov.au
South/East Region	melena.mckaskill@transport.vic.gov.au
Regional Planning Services	
Barwon South West/Grampians	heather.forsyth@transport.vic.gov.au
Gippsland	suzy.thomas@transport.vic.gov.au
Loddon Mallee/Hume	elke.cummins@transport.vic.gov.au

7 Public Question Time

8 Officer Reports

8.1 Knox City Council 2025-2026 Annual Report

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Corporate Planning and Reporting Officer, Kash Khalid Head of Strategy and Business Intelligence, Kate McInnes
Manager:	Manager Strategy and Transformation, Tom Scanlan
Executive:	Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
Knox City Council's 2025-2026 draft Annual Report is presented to Council for consideration, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

The Annual Report provides an overview of Council's services, achievements, performance and financial position for the 2025-2026 financial year. It supports public transparency with Council's operations and shares the achievements and challenges faced during the financial year.

The Annual Report 2025-2026 includes the financial and performance information achieved for that year. Upon completion of the external audit of the Financial and Performance Statements, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office report was received on 22 September 2026 and have received an unqualified report with the Financial Statements or the Performance Statement.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:
1. Endorse the 2025-2026 Annual Report (Attachment 1) in accordance with Sections 98 and 99 of the Local Government Act 2020.
2. Note the 2025-2026 Annual Report will be made available via Council's website.

1. DISCUSSION
The 2025-2026 Annual Report provides an opportunity to report to the Knox community on Council services, actions, performance and achievements over the financial year. It supports public transparency in Council's operations and provides a clear account of key achievements, challenges and progress against Council's strategic commitments.

The preparation of the Annual Report 2025-2026 has included the collation and review of Council's financial and performance information. On 14 September 2026, Council approved, in principle, the year-end Financial Statements and the Performance Statement in advance of the Auditor-General's consideration. The report from the Auditor-General on the Financial Statements and Performance Statement was received on 22 September 2026 and found no indication of any material issues with the Financial Statements or the Performance Statement.

The Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 98 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) (the Act), requiring Council to prepare an Annual Report containing:

a) A report of operations of Council.
b) An audited Performance Statement.
c) Audited Financial Statements.
d) A copy of the Auditor's Report on the Performance Statement.
e) A copy of the Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements under Part 3 of the Audit Act 1994 (Vic).
f) Any other matters prescribed by the Regulations.

Section 100 of the Act requires the Mayor to report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council Meeting open to the public. Following presentation of the Annual Report, the document will be available to the community in electronic format via the Knox City Council website, with hard copies available on request.

The 2025-2026 financial year is the first year of delivery for the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Of the 45 actions listed in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, 43 actions have been completed and two actions are behind schedule. The two actions that are behind schedule will remain in progress and will be carried forward to 2026-2027 to support their completion. Progress will continue to be monitored and reported through the quarterly reporting process.

The structure of the Annual Report is outlined below:

Introduction
This includes the ten-year Community Vision, fast facts about our services, and the year in review which forms the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer message.

Report of Operations
This section includes a Financial Summary, details of the Capital Works Program, major achievements, information about our Councillors and our staff, Knox's planning framework and key services and Council's performance against the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. The service performance indicators of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) are also included in this section.

Governance and Statutory Information
This section includes the Governance and Management Checklist, annual statutory reporting requirements, Councillor meeting attendance, documents available for inspection, audit operations, and contracts.

Performance Statement
This is the Statement prepared under Sections 98 and 99 of the Act and reports on the LGPRF (service, financial and sustainable capacity indicators). The regulations require an explanation of material variations for all relevant indicators. Materiality thresholds have been set at +/- 10%.

Financial Statements
This section contains the Financial Statements, as well as a guide to assist readers in understanding their nature and content. These Statements have received an unqualified report from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.

2. ENGAGEMENT
Under Section 100 of the Local Government Act 2020, for the purposes of Section 18(1)(d), the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council Meeting open to the public.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Information about Council's achievements and aspirations for the community and social impacts are contained in the Annual Report 2025-2026.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS
Council's achievements and progress working towards Council's Net Zero 2030 target and the Community Net Zero 2040 will be contained in the 2025-2026 Climate Response Plan Annual Report which is scheduled to be presented at the 14 December 2026 Council meeting.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
Information about Council's achievements and aspirations for the environment are contained in the 2025-2026 Annual Report. Producing the report in a primarily electronic format saves paper resources and printing costs.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
An overview of Council's financial performance is presented in the 2025-2026 Annual Report. The Annual Report contains a guide on how to understand the detailed financial report which includes audited Financial and Standard Statements.

7. RISKS
Council has well established processes to ensure the Annual Report is prepared accurately and on time, mitigating the key risk of legislative non-compliance. These processes include a range of controls, including external audit reviews, to ensure the Annual Report is an accurate, transparent and comprehensive overview of Council's performance over the previous financial year.

An accessible and detailed Annual Report provides the community insight into how public resources have been managed and how effectively Council has delivered on its commitments; mitigating risks to Council's reputation by fostering transparency and accountability which builds trust between the Council and its stakeholders.

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.

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 2020 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 - Knox City Council 2025-2026 Annual Report [**8.1.1** - 224 pages]

Annual Report 2025–2026



knox

Knox City Council

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Yana djerring ba ngarrnga djerring* – Walking together and listening

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land in Knox. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities come from a variety of different nations within Australia including the Torres Strait, the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such, we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's histories.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin Nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of First Nations peoples and the traumatic stories of colonisation. Reconciliation and truth telling are inseparable when healing and relationships are the goal. Deep listening to the stories of the Dreaming, cultures, histories and the impact of colonisation on First Peoples and Country is the first step in understanding, respect, relationships and healing.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the Traditional Custodians, the local First Peoples communities, and the wider community. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

*Woi-wurrung language used with permission of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

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Our 10-year community vision

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

Who we are

The municipality of Knox is approximately 25 kilometres from the Melbourne central business district. It covers an area of 113.84 square kilometres and consists of the suburbs of Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Knoxfield, Lysterfield, Rowville, Sassafras, Scoresby, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully, Wantirna and Wantirna South.

163,820
people call Knox home

29.4%
of working residents are employed in Knox



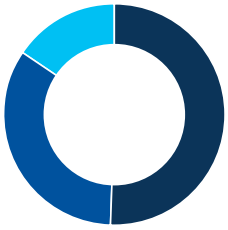
40 is the median age of residents

0–14	17%	40–54	20%
15–24	12%	55–64	13%
25–39	20%	65+	18%



33% of residents were born overseas

China	5.3%	Malaysia	2.5%
United Kingdom	3.8%	Sri Lanka	2.4%
India	3.2%		



We have a mix of family compositions

Couple family with children	37.1%
Couple family without children	25.0%
One-parent family	11.2%

Fast facts about our services in 2025–2026

128,643
online service requests

14,687
visits to Customer Service Centre

85,450
telephone calls received, with 84% resolved at the first point of contact

36,140
hard waste bookings

4,325
children provided with MCH services

1,352
four-week key age and stage visits

5,093
infants and children immunised

14,745
participants in Youth Services events and programs

38,969
meals delivered

382,115
visits to aquatic facilities

1,028
animal management requests

946,246
physical library items loaned

Fast facts about our services in 2025–2026

694,557
digital library items loaned

903
planning applications received

10,603
community transport trips made

2,372
trees planted

1,251kms
of footpaths maintained

40,189
drainage pits maintained

280
playgrounds and outdoor equipment

732kms
of local roads maintained

64
sportsgrounds and major reserves maintained

351
Council-owned buildings maintained

19,117m²
of graffiti removed from Knox City Council's assets

The year in review

In 2025-26, we began implementing our new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, shaped by the voices of more than 1,100 community members.

This plan sets out our shared priorities for the next four years and ensures that everything we do continues to reflect what matters most to our community. This year we have worked to deliver on the priorities identified by our community, while responding to the ongoing challenges facing our sector, including rising costs, increasing service demand and the continuing impact of rate capping. While the operating environment has remained challenging, Council has continued to deliver essential services and invest in the infrastructure our community relies on.

This year's Budget invested more than $115.26 million in services and facilities, alongside a capital works program of nearly $48.65 million. Key investments included upgrades to local roads, footpaths and cycling networks, improvements to sporting and community facilities, and renewal works across parks, playgrounds and drainage infrastructure. Works progressed across the municipality to improve access to community spaces and enhance the quality and reliability of local infrastructure. Through these projects, we are continuing to build a city that supports active living, strengthens community connection and meets the needs of a growing and changing population.

Across the year, Council continued to deliver a broad range of services supporting residents at all stages of life. This included delivery of the biennial Youth Summit, providing an opportunity for young people aged 12 to 18 years to share their views on issues that matter most to them. Participants discussed a range of priority topics, including life skills and education, outdoor and recreational opportunities, and how Council can best communicate and engage with young people. Insights gathered through the Summit will inform the planning and delivery of Youth Services over the next 18 months, ensuring our programs and initiatives continue to respond to the needs and aspirations of local young people.

Throughout the year, Council delivered a range of programs designed to strengthen connections between people of different ages across the community. These initiatives brought together residents to participate in intergenerational playgroups, technology support programs, life skills workshops and sewing sessions that encouraged the sharing of knowledge, skills and experiences. By creating opportunities for meaningful interaction between generations, these programs helped foster social inclusion, build community connections and challenge age-related stereotypes. Through these activities, Council continues to support greater understanding between age groups and contribute to reducing ageism within the community.

Responding to climate change continues to be a key Council priority. This year we delivered efficiency upgrades to lighting and air conditioning at the Knox Civic Centre, lighting replacement at several outdoor car parks including Wally Tew Reserve and Pickett Reserve, the installation of pool blankets to the 50m Pool at Knox Leisureworks, and lighting upgrades to Knoxfield Pickleball and Tennis Club. We are progressively replacing our fleet vehicles with zero/low emission electric and hybrid vehicles.

Council finalised and endorsed the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029, which outlines Council's approach to managing dogs and cats across the municipality over the next four years and provides a framework for promoting responsible



Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor



Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

pet ownership and addressing issues associated with domestic animals within the community. The Plan will see Council deliver animal management activities through a combination of education, community engagement, service provision, capacity building, regulation and enforcement, which will help to balance the needs of pet owners, the wider community and the environment.

During the year, we developed and launched a Continuous Improvement Framework to improve customer experience, staff experience and operational efficiency. The framework provides a consistent and structured approach to identifying, prioritising and implementing improvements across the organisation, supporting better outcomes for our community and creating a culture of ongoing learning and innovation.

Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing remains a key priority for Council. During 2025-26, Council officers continued to work with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to support older residents in accessing affordable housing options. In response to the growing number of people experiencing visible homelessness across the municipality, Council submitted targeted advocacy to the Minister for Housing, seeking state government funding for homelessness outreach services in Knox following the identification of a local service funding gap. The State government announced additional investment in homelessness and housing support services. While service providers in Knox have not specifically received additional funding, this investment is welcomed news.

Promoting gender equality and fostering an inclusive community remained a priority for Council throughout 2025-26. Council delivered a range of initiatives to celebrate the achievements of women and advance gender equality, including International Women's Day events and activities for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. Delivered in partnership with community organisations, regional councils, Your Library and other stakeholders, these initiatives increased community awareness, promoted respectful relationships and strengthened understanding of gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence.

Engagement with our community remains central to our work. Over the past year, we have continued to listen and respond through consultation and feedback processes, ensuring that community voices inform our planning and decision making. This commitment to transparency and accountability underpins our approach and helps build trust with our community.

Rising service delivery and infrastructure costs, combined with the ongoing impacts of rate capping, continue to place pressure on Council's financial position. During the year, we continued to carefully target our resources to support the areas and services most valued by the community.

Council continued to advocate on issues that matter to Knox, working with other levels of government and key stakeholders to pursue outcomes that benefit our municipality. Effective advocacy remains an important part of our role in ensuring the needs and aspirations of our community are recognised in broader planning and investment decisions.

The year in review (continued)

We are proud of what has been achieved this year. The achievements presented throughout this Annual Report reflect the collective effort of many people. We acknowledge the leadership of councillors, the dedication of Council staff, and the valuable contribution of community organisations, volunteers and residents. Together, these efforts help strengthen our community and contribute to positive outcomes across Knox.

Our 2025-26 infrastructure capital works program delivered:

$1.0m
Bridges

$1.3m
Car Parks

$10.6m
Roads

$2.5m
Plant & Machinery

$4.6m
Drainage & Stormwater and machinery

$1.7m
Playgrounds

$4.8m
Paths

$3.2m
Open Space

$6.5m
Community Buildings

$0.4m
Miscellaneous

$14.0m
Sport & Leisure Facilities

These amounts include $2.4 million in operating expenditure to deliver the projects.

On behalf of councillors and the organisation, we are proud to recognise the achievements of our Council over the past year. While we have collectively faced challenges, we have worked to meet these with resilience and compassion to achieve great outcomes for our community.

Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor

Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer



How to read this report

Knox City Council's 2025-2026 Annual Report is organised under nine main headings:

1	**Report of Operations**	A comprehensive report of Council's operations over the 2025-2026 financial year, including a financial summary, major achievements, details of the capital works program, details of Councillors and Council staff, Council services, and performance against the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
2	**Governance and Management Checklist**	A list of Council's governance and management plans and mechanisms as set out in *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic) sch 1.
3	**Council Operations**	A list of Meetings of Council in 2025-2026, Councillor attendance, committee meetings and attendance, and Councillor expenses for the 2025-2026 financial year.
4	**Audit Operations**	A description of the membership, purpose and activities of Council's Audit and Risk Committee during 2025-2026, as well as details of Council's internal and external auditors.
5	**Public Transparency**	A description of the ways in which Council information is made publicly available in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) s 57.
6	**Statutory Information**	A list and brief descriptions of the major statutes under which Knox City Council conducts its operations.
7	**Contracts**	A description of contracts with external suppliers entered into by Knox City Council over the 2025-2026 financial year.
8	**Performance Statement**	A statement of Council's performance in 2025-2026 against the service, financial, and sustainable capacity indicators mandated by the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) s 98(4).
9	**Financial Report**	Five key financial reports – Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works – with accompanying notes, including budget comparison notes, to show how Council performed financially during the 2025-2026 financial year and the overall position at the end of the financial year on 30 June 2026.

Knox City Council

Report of operations

For the year ended 30 June 2026



Financial summary

Council's financial position continued to remain sound throughout the 2025–26 financial year, while noting that the forward outlook remains challenging.

A summary of our performance is outlined below while detailed information is included within the financial statements and performance statement sections of this report.

Operating Result

Summary of financial performance as at 30 June 2026	Budget $'000	Actual $'000
Total income	222,308	230,990
Total expenses	193,154	200,252
Surplus/(deficit) for the reporting period	**29,154**	**30,738**

The operating surplus reported in the 2025-26 financial statements is $30.7 million, which compares to a budgeted surplus of $29.2 million.

The variance has resulted from greater than budgeted monetary and non-monetary contributions, other income (largely interest income, reimbursements and rebates), and operating grants income. The operating grants income variance is largely due to the timing of the receipt of the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants with funding distributed through the Victoria Local Government Grants Commission where 50% of the 2025-2026 funding was received during the 2026 financial year, while 80% of the 2026-2027 funding was received prior to 30 June 2026. This has been partially offset by a timing difference in land sales, with these sales set to primarily proceed during the 2026-2027 financial year. There has also been an increase in depreciation expense due the revaluation of buildings and infrastructure assets at 30 June 2026.

Income

Total income for the 2025-26 financial year was $230.9 million. Overall income increased by $13.9 million compared to the previous year, which represents a 6.4% increase.

The increase was largely due to the receipt of monetary and non-monetary contributions, the recognition of capital grants, and the increase in income derived from rates and charges.



Rates and charges	67%	Contributions - monetary	4%
Grants - operating	10%	Contributions - non-monetary	4%
User fees	6%	Statutory fees and fines	2%
Grants - capital	5%	Other income	2%

The decrease in operating grants compared to 2024-25 is largely due to the majority of Council's kindergartens being transferred to private providers during the 2024-25 financial year.

The rates and charges received, which totalled $155.1 million, represents 67% of the total income generated. Other major sources of income included grants of $33.0 million, contributions of $17.9 million, and user fees of $15.0 million.

User fees were up $1.4 million on budget, while statutory fees were down $0.4 million. Operating grants were up $2.7 million on budget largely due to the timing of the receipt of the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants with funding distributed through the Victoria Local Government Grants Commission, while total capital grants recognised were largely as budgeted. Other income was $3.1 million up on budget due to an increase in interest income, rebates and reimbursements received. Monetary contributions were up $4.2 million on budget, while non-monetary contributions, being assets handed over to Council by developers, were up $6.7 million on budget.

A breakdown of Council's income sources is shown in this section, which highlights Council's reliance on rate income to fund community services and the renewal of community assets.

Expenses

Total expenses for 2025-26 were $200.3 million. Overall expenditure decreased by $4.6 million, a 2.2% decrease from the previous financial year. The decrease primarily relates to the decrease in the loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, together with the decrease in employee costs. The employee costs decrease is largely due to the transfer of the majority of Council's kindergartens to other providers during the 2024-25 financial year. These decreases are partially offset by the increase in depreciation.

Materials and services expenditure was $1.7 million below budget, including $0.9 million attributable to a shift in operating expenditure on capital projects from materials and services to employee costs. A breakdown of Council's expenditure categories is shown in this section. It highlights that the majority of total expenses consisted of employee costs of $76.4 million and materials and services of $75.4 million.



Employee costs	38%	Borrowing/ Finance Costs	2%
Materials and services	37%	Other Expenses	1%
Depreciation/ Amortisation	18%	Net Loss on Disposal	1%
Contributions and donations	3%		

Financial summary (continued)

Overall Financial Position

Council ended the 2025-26 financial year with net assets of $2.6 billion, an increase of $342.4 million when compared to the budget.

Summary of financial position as at 30 June 2026	Budget $'000	Actual $'000
Total assets	2,428,687	2,779,173
Total liabilities	124,986	133,046
Net assets	**2,303,701**	**2,646,127**

The variance in total assets is primarily due to the net-asset revaluation increment of $344.6 million through the revaluation of land, buildings and infrastructure over the last two years since the 2025-26 budget was adopted.

The Balance Sheet reflects a satisfactory position with working capital ratio (liquidity) of 1.67:1 or 167%, meaning Council has $1.67 of current assets for each $1.00 of current liabilities.

Total trade and other receivables were $26.3 million (the 2024-25 figure was $24.3 million). Included in this was rates debtors, which increased to $21.5 million in 2025-2026 from $19.8 million in 2024-2025.

Cash Position

Summary of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2026	Budget $'000	Actual $'000
Cash flows provided by/(used in) operating activities	44,335	58,364
Cash flow provided for/(used in) investing activities	(41,389)	(49,813)
Cash flow provided for/(used in) financing activities	(8,755)	(8,383)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(5,809)	168
Cash at beginning of the financial year	42,932	54,323
Cash at end of the financial year	**37,123**	**54,491**

Council's cash position as at 30 June 2026 was $54.5 million, with there being a further $5.0 million in investment accounts. This result represents an increase in cash holdings, including other financial assets, from the previous year of $2.7 million.

Debt Position

Council borrowed $6.0 million, which was as budgeted. Borrowings were used to fund works within the capital works program. Interest-bearing liabilities totalling $80.2 million was $0.1 million greater than budget.

Infrastructure asset management and capital works

The City of Knox experienced substantial growth during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, when much of the municipality's road network, drainage infrastructure, footpaths and community facilities were established.

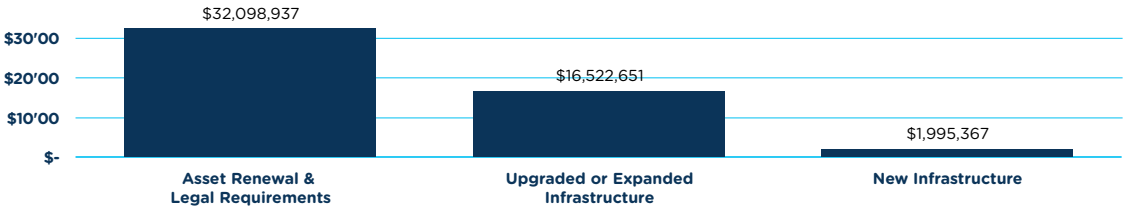
Today, many of these assets are reaching a stage in their lifecycle where renewal is required to maintain service standards, support community expectations and ensure infrastructure remains safe, functional and reliable.

Cyclical condition assessments continue to reinforce the need for sustained investment in asset renewal. Timely renewal of ageing infrastructure helps preserve service levels, maximise asset life and reduce the risk of more costly maintenance and renewal interventions in the future. Effective asset management also plays a critical role in maintaining Council's long-term financial sustainability.

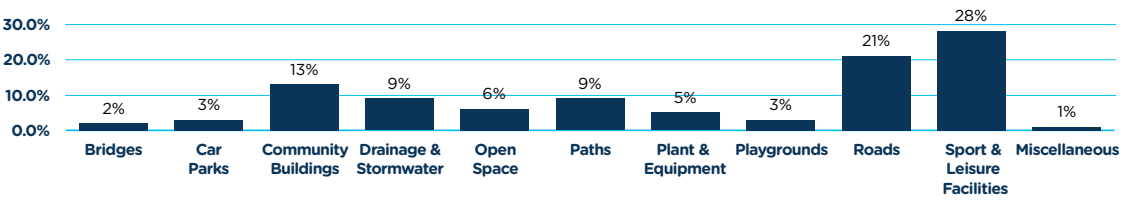
To support these objectives, Council allocates funding each year through its annual budget to renew and maintain community assets with a replacement value exceeding $2.6 billion. Investment is also directed towards new assets, upgrades, expansions and statutory compliance projects that enhance community facilities, public spaces and essential infrastructure across the municipality.

During 2025-2026, Council delivered $48.2 million in infrastructure capital works that met the accounting requirements for capitalisation and a total of $50.6 million when operating expense is also included. The charts below show the distribution of expenditure across Council's Capital Works Program, including the Asset Renewal Program, demonstrating Council's continued commitment to maintaining and improving community infrastructure.

Expenditure by Funding Category



Capital Works Expenditure (%) by Asset Category. 2025-2026



Infrastructure asset management and capital works (continued)

Asset renewal program highlights

During 2025-2026, $32.11 million was invested in renewing existing community infrastructure assets and to comply with legislative requirements and maintain safe, functional and fit-for-purpose facilities for the community.

Highlights included:

Improvements to Local Roads

$10.64 million was invested into local roads, including major road reconstruction works completed on Chandler Road (Boronia), Templeton Road (Wantirna) and Blackwood Park Road (Ferntree Gully). These works help maintain a safe and serviceable road network for all users.

Improvements to Local Footpaths

21,655m^2 of footpath renewal was undertaken across 306 Knox streets. These works improved pedestrian safety, accessibility and connectivity, ensuring footpaths remain fit-for-purpose for the community.

Improvements to Community Buildings

$4.05 million was invested in 69 small to medium-scale improvements across community buildings, including sporting pavilions, community halls and early years facilities. These works enhanced the condition, functionality and accessibility of community assets.

Improvements to Sportsfields, Courts and Recreation Facilities

$4.22 million was invested in the renewal of sportsfields, tennis and netball courts, and cricket nets. These improvements enhanced the quality, safety and functionality of sporting infrastructure, supporting increased participation and recreational opportunities.

Improvements to Playgrounds

$1.29 million was invested in upgrades across 10 playgrounds. These works enhanced safety, accessibility and play value, providing improved recreational opportunities for children and families.



New and upgrade program highlights

$18.50 million was invested in new and upgraded community infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of our growing community.

Highlights included:

Completion of Sports Pavilion Upgrades at Wally Tew Reserve and Tormore Reserve

Upgrades at these sites have improved change facilities for all players, making them more inclusive and better suited to female users as participation in female football continues to grow. Improvements to social spaces, kitchens and storage areas have also enhanced the functionality of the venues and supported broader community use. The upgrade at Wally Tew Reserve was supported by grant funding from the Victorian State Government ($2.0 million), and the upgrade at Tormore Reserve was made possible by grant funding from the Australian Government ($5.0 million) and Victorian State Government ($1.2 million).

A New Dog Park and Playspace Upgrade at Wantirna Reserve

The new off-leash dog park and upgraded playspace at Wantirna Reserve have enhanced recreational opportunities for residents of all ages. The improvements, as part of Council's implementation of the Wantirna Reserve Masterplan, support active lifestyles, social connection and community wellbeing while providing a more accessible and enjoyable open space for the community.

A New Naturalised Floodway at Liberty Avenue Reserve

The new naturalised floodway at Liberty Avenue Reserve has enhanced local biodiversity, improved stormwater management and contributed to healthier waterways. The naturalised floodway provides valuable habitat for native flora and fauna, improves water quality through natural filtration and is designed to adapt to varying rainfall conditions, while creating an attractive natural space for the community to enjoy and learn about the local environment.

New Exercise Equipment at Marie Wallace Bayswater Park, Wally Tew Reserve and Carrington Park

The installation of new outdoor exercise equipment at Marie Wallace Bayswater Park, Wally Tew Reserve and Carrington Park has expanded opportunities for outdoor recreation and physical activity. The equipment supports health and wellbeing by providing accessible, free-to-use facilities for residents of all ages and abilities. The equipment at both Marie Wallace Bayswater Park and Wally Tew Reserve has been specifically designed to support older residents by promoting strength, balance and mobility.

Major achievements



Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 launched

Council launched the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, setting the strategic direction for the Knox community over the next four years. The plan sets out what we will do to respond to the changing needs and priorities of the Knox community. It is shaped by the community's aspirations, needs, values and priorities, and informs long term financial planning. Developed from feedback from over 1,100 community members, the plan focuses on six key themes: enhancing community connection to vital services, embracing inclusion and diversity, caring for our environment, responsible governance, community safety, and planning our future city.



Asset Plan 2025-2035

Council developed and endorsed the Asset Plan 2025-2035 to provide strategic direction on how Council cost-effectively manages our community's assets to meet evolving needs. Council manages $2.68 billion worth of community assets, including buildings, roads and footpaths, sporting facilities, drainage systems, bushland and playgrounds. The Plan guides how Council priorities and manages these assets over a 10-year period.

Major achievements (continued)



Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Council developed the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029, to further support responsible dog and cat ownership in Knox and guide Council's animal management focus areas over the next four years. The plan was developed with feedback from more than 473 submissions from community members, including dog and cat owners, non-pet owners, park and reserve users and domestic animal businesses. The Plan addresses responsible pet ownership, animal registration, management of dangerous dogs and initiatives to reduce nuisance behaviour, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of both animals and the Knox community.



Youth Summit

Council delivered the biennial Youth Summit, providing an important platform to hear directly from the voices of young people on issues that are important to them. The Summit engaged Knox young people in meaningful conversations about their aspirations, challenges and priorities, informing Council's youth programs and services. Throughout the year, Council delivered programs of activities for young people during school holidays and term time, providing options for participation and skills development.

Major achievements (continued)



Bringing the community together through festivals and events

Council fostered community connection through a vibrant program of festivals, arts and cultural events across Knox. Highlights included Knox Fest, Knox Carols, the Knox Seniors Festival, StageScape and Radiant, providing opportunities for residents of all ages to celebrate, connect and participate in community life while promoting inclusion, wellbeing and local pride.



Strengthening emergency preparedness and community resilience

Council worked in partnership with neighbouring municipalities through the Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership to strengthen emergency preparedness and response capabilities. Through coordinated planning, resource sharing and collaboration, the partnership supports community resilience and helps ensure the region is better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies.

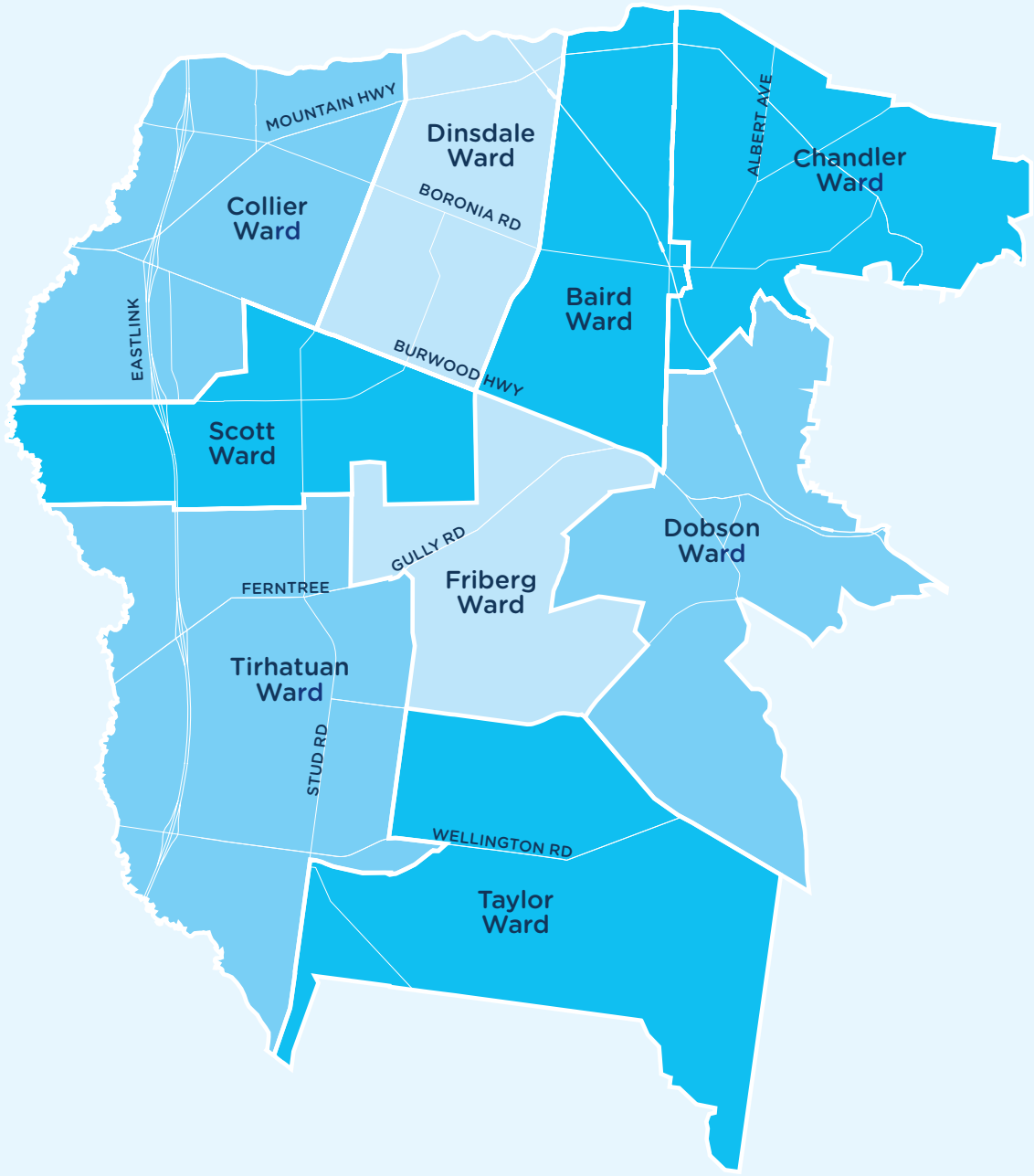


Strengthening connections through intergenerational programs

Council delivered a range of intergenerational initiatives that connected older residents with children, young people and tertiary students, strengthening community connections and reducing social isolation. Highlights included the Youngster.co technology support program, which helped older residents build digital skills while fostering meaningful connections with younger participants. Other programs included intergenerational playgroups, school holiday activities and life skills workshops delivered in partnership with community organisations. Across the year these initiatives reached more than 4,700 community members through 168 activities designed to promote inclusion, wellbeing and connection across generations.



Council wards



Our councillors

Knox City Council comprises nine councillors elected by residents across the municipality's wards. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected annually by the councillors.

Councillors work together to set and guide strategic direction and decisions for the Knox community. They work closely with the Chief Executive Officer and Council administration to do this.

The Councillors for the 2024 to 2028 Council term are listed below.



Cr Peter Lockwood
Baird Ward
M. 0499 111 639
E. Cr.Peter.Lockwood@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Paige Kennett, Mayor
Chandler Ward
Mayoral term: Nov 2025–current
M. 0498 880 807
E. Cr.Paige.Kennett@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Chris Duncan, Deputy Mayor
Collier Ward
Deputy Mayoral term: Nov 2025–current
M. 0492 032 772
E. Cr.Chris.Duncan@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Robert Williams
Dinsdale Ward
M. 0488 333 975
E. Cr.Robert.Williams@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Meagan Baker
Dobson Ward
M. 0437 808 011
E. Cr.Meagan.Baker@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Parisa Considine
Friberg Ward
M. 0499 444 850
E. Cr.Parisa.Considine@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Lisa Cooper
Scott Ward
Mayoral term: Nov 2024–Nov 2025
M. 0407 240 275
E. Cr.Lisa.Cooper@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Susan Pearce
Taylor Ward
M. 0499 660 084
E. Cr.Susan.Pearce@knox.vic.gov.au



Cr Glen Atwell
Tirhatuan Ward
Deputy Mayoral term: Nov 2024–Nov 2025
M. 0499 884 585
E. Cr.Glen.Atwell@knox.vic.gov.au

Our people

Executive Leadership Team

The following information is representative of the Executive Leadership Team in place at Knox as at 30 June 2026.



Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

Bruce Dobson joined Knox City Council as Chief Executive Officer on 8 September 2021. As Chief Executive Officer, Bruce was appointed by Council and is responsible for leading the organisation in delivering on Council's objectives.



Matt Kelleher
Director Customer and Performance

Matt's directorate consists of:

- Chief Information Office
- Customer and Communications
- Governance and Risk
- People, Culture and Development
- Strategy and Transformation



Navec Lorkin
Chief Financial Officer

Navec's portfolio consists of:

- Finance Operations
- Rates and Valuations
- Strategic Procurement and Property



Judy Chalkley
Director Connected Communities

Judy's directorate consists of:

- Active and Creative Communities
- Community Access and Support
- Community Strengthening
- Early Years



Jonathan McNally
Director City Liveability

Jonathan's directorate consists of:

- City Futures
- City Planning and Building
- City Safety and Health
- City Projects



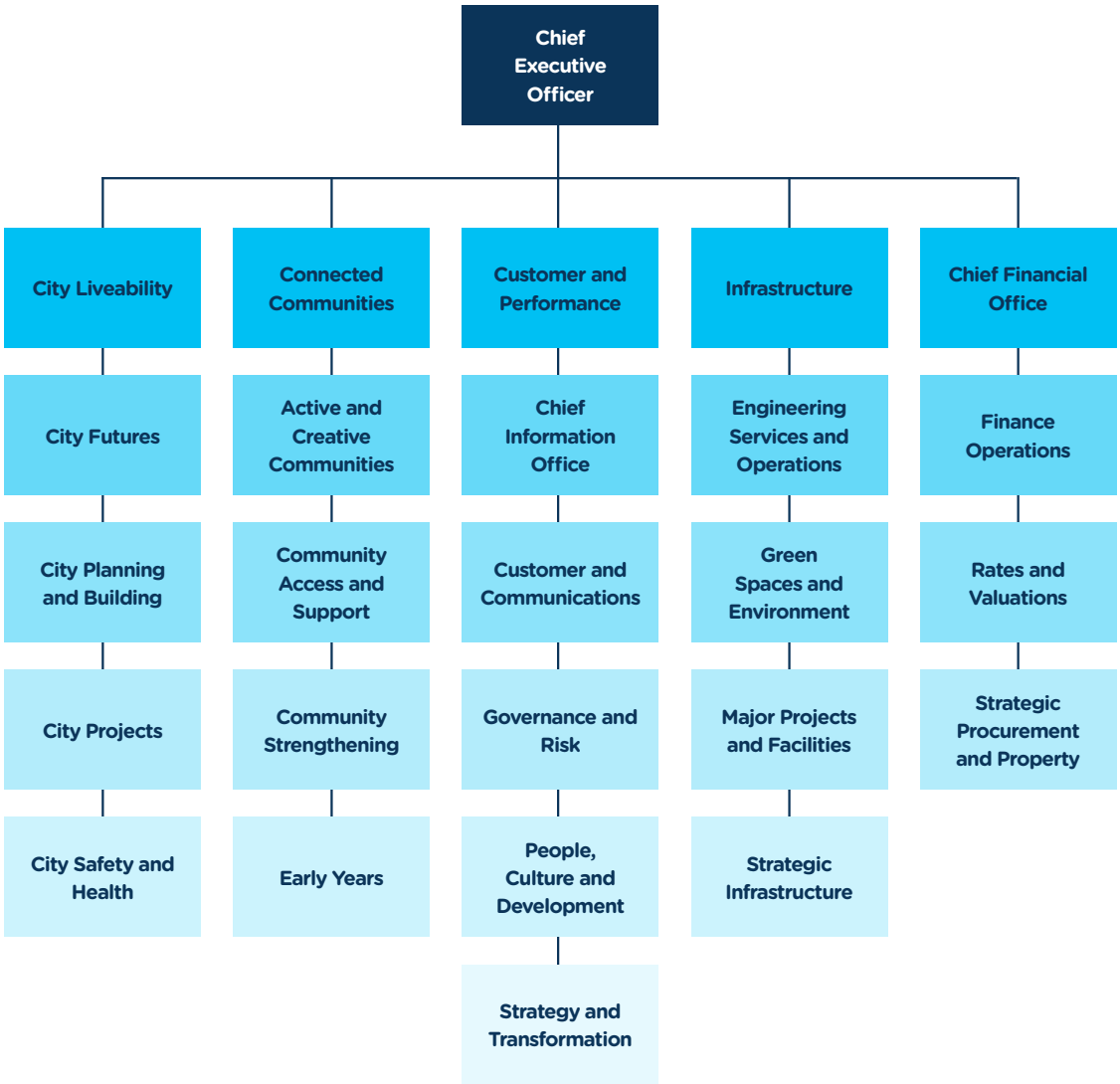
Grant Thorne
Director Infrastructure

Grant's directorate consists of:

- Engineering Services and Operations
- Green Spaces and Environment
- Major Projects and Facilities
- Strategic Infrastructure

Organisation chart

The following chart sets out the organisational structure of Knox City Council as at 30 June 2026.



There were no major changes that took place during the financial year.

Workplace report

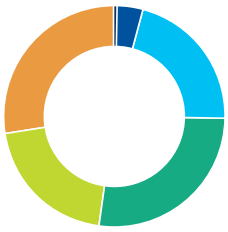
As at 30 June 2026, Council employed 839 employees, consisting of full-time, part-time, temporary and casual positions, equivalent to 619.59 full-time employees. Overall, 157 permanent, temporary and casual staff joined Council during the year to fill vacant positions and to meet legislative, project and operational requirements.

Staff by Functional Area in 2025-2026

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) as at 30 June 2026

	Full-time			Part-time			Casual			Gender Total			Grand Total
Directorate	Female	Male	Persons of Self-described Gender	Female	Male	Persons of Self-described Gender	Female	Male	Persons of Self-described Gender	Female	Male	Persons of Self-described Gender	
Chief Executive Office	1.00	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.00	1.00	-	**2.00**
Chief Financial Office	13.00	7.00	-	5.35	-		-		-	18.35	7.00	-	**25.35**
City Liveability	42.00	48.00	-	30.80	7.37	0.20	1.02	0.39	0.03	73.82	55.76	0.23	**129.81**
Connected Communities	84.00	13.00	-	64.37	4.24		0.72	0.21	-	149.09	17.45	-	**166.54**
Customer and Performance	65.00	37.00	-	20.54	3.92	-	0.12	0.12	-	85.66	41.04	-	**126.70**
Infrastructure	42.00	119.00	-	7.43	0.67	-	0.06	0.03	-	49.49	119.7	-	**169.19**
Grand Total	**247.00**	**225.00**	**0.00**	**128.49**	**16.20**	**0.20**	**1.92**	**0.75**	**0.03**	**377.41**	**241.95**	**0.23**	**619.59**

Full time equivalent (FTE) council staff by organisational structure



Chief Executive Office	2.00	Connected Communities	166.54
Chief Financial Office	25.35	Customer and Performance	126.70
City Liveability	129.81	Infrastructure	169.19

Council Staff

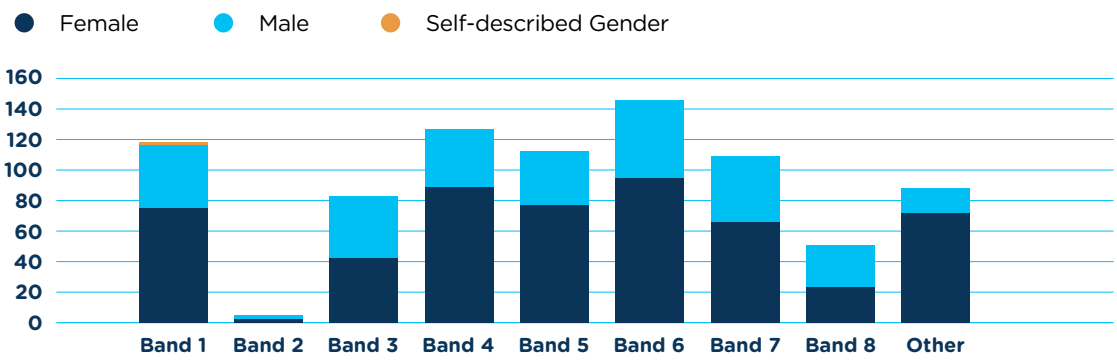
A summary of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender are detailed in the following table and graph.

Employee Classification	Female	Male	Persons of Self-described Gender	Total
Band 1	10.87	5.93	0.23	17.03
Band 2	0.63	2.03		2.66
Band 3	28.56	36.85		65.41
Band 4	60.13	26.86		86.99
Band 5	64.00	33.48		97.48
Band 6	85.67	49.80		135.47
Band 7	62.04	43.00		105.04
Band 8	21.94	28.00		49.94
Other*	43.57	16.00		59.57
Total	**377.41**	**241.95**	**0.23**	**619.59**

*'Other' includes non-banded workforce members, including health professionals and nurses, teachers, assistants and senior executive officers.

In this report, the terms man/male and woman/female are used interchangeably, consistent with the data currently available. Council recognises that sex and gender are distinct concepts and that current binary data collection limits the representation of diverse identities within our workforce and community. Council is working to improve our data collection and reporting processes to support the accurate use of sex and gender terminology.

Employee Classification by Gender



Our performance

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Our Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, adopted on 23 June 2025, is our commitment to the Knox community. It sets out our Knox community vision and explains how we will respond to the community's changing needs and priorities. The plan reflects our shared aspirations, values and goals. It also guides our long-term financial planning and decision-making.

To develop the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 we engaged over 1,100 community members to make sure the plan reflects the vision, values and aspirations of the people of Knox.

Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

Council takes an integrated approach to planning and reporting, with the 10-year Community Vision directly informing short, medium and long-term planning.



The key themes, strategic objectives and health and wellbeing priorities of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan are also integrated across our other key strategies and plans. This approach provides a line of sight through every service in Council to achieve and report back on our community's vision and our wellbeing commitment.


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Our themes

Our six key themes are our broad focus areas that reflect community priorities and aspirations.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.

Read more on page 35

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.

Read more on page 45

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.

Read more on page 56



Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.

Read more on page 64

Being a strong voice for safety

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.

Read more on page 72

Planning our future city

Our neighborhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

Read more on page 82

Our performance (continued)

Council services

Council delivers 34 services to support our community at all stages of life, aligned to the six Council and Health and Wellbeing themes. We are committed to continuously improving our services to best meet the needs of our diverse community now and into the future.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources	Embracing connection inclusion and diversity	Caring for and enhancing our environment	Leading, listening and governing responsibly	Being a strong voice for safety	Planning our future city
Cemetery	Arts & Culture	Fleet, Plant & Machinery	Customer Service	Community Laws	Capital Works Planning
Economic Development	Early years	Open Space & Biodiversity	Data, Information & Technology	Community Safety	Property & Facilities
Health	Festivals & Events	Sustainability & Climate Response	Finance	Emergency Management	Statutory Planning
Libraries	Seniors	Waste	Governance	Food Safety	Strategic Land Use Planning
Roads & Transport	Social Research, Policy & Planning	Water & Drainage	People	Statutory Building	
	Sport & Leisure		Procurement		
	Youth		Risk Management		
			Strategy & Performance		



Health and wellbeing priorities

Knox City Council understands that the health and wellbeing of our community is essential for our collective prosperity and quality of life. By measuring and addressing wellbeing, we can identify areas of need, track progress, and implement targeted interventions to create a healthier, more resilient community.

The following symbols are reflected throughout this report to identify alignment with the health and wellbeing priorities.

These symbols are reflected throughout this report to identify alignment with the health and wellbeing priorities	
Reduce harm from alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling	**Advocate for equity across our community**
Promote equal participation opportunities and celebrate our diverse community	**Support prevention of all forms of violence by promoting safety and respect**
Support access to affordable and nutritious food	**Build resilience to emergencies and threats, including climate change**
Create opportunities for active living	**Improve social connection and mental wellbeing**

Health and wellbeing impact

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Our Knox community will feel better supported and more informed. They will be able to access the jobs, services, and the nutrition they need to sustain a healthy, and satisfying lifestyle.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Our Knox community will feel valued, connected and included.

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Our Knox community will be able to enjoy the benefits of a well maintained and sustainable environment to support their mental health and vitality.

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Our Knox community will feel heard and considered which will enhance community cohesion and a sense of belonging.

Being a strong voice for safety

Our Knox community will feel safer and more resilient, knowing that the Council is working together with community and agencies to create safe places and spaces and promote respect.

Planning our future city

Our Knox community will be able to fully enjoy their local area, knowing that what they need now and into the future has been considered and planned. They will feel proud of where they live.

Our performance (continued)

Our Detailed Performance

This section of the Annual Report 2025-2026 provides an overview of the achievements of the first year of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

Our Actions

There are 45 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that were funded in the 2025-2026 financial year. These are the major initiatives for the 2025-2026 financial year. Progress against these actions is reported in the following pages under each Theme.

Progress status is reported based on the following colour coding:

Complete	Behind schedule
✓	●

The assessment of progress relates to Year 1 (2025-2026) of the four year Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. Items that are behind schedule are identified with accompanying commentary.

How We'll Know We're Making a Difference

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 includes a range of performance measures that track progress towards achieving the outcomes identified under each Theme. While Council has direct control over some measures, others are influenced through partnerships with other organisations, including other levels of government and service providers. Data for these measures is collected at varying intervals, and as such, some indicators may not be updated annually. Where updated data is available, results are reported in this Annual Report.

Our Ongoing Work

Council delivers a wide range of services to support the community. These services are aligned to the Themes and contribute to achieving the outcomes outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. While services may contribute to multiple Themes, they are presented under the Theme to which they contribute most strongly.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) was established by the Victorian Government in 2014 and is a mandated reporting requirement for all councils. The LGPRF is a comparative reporting framework that ensures performance is measured and reported consistently across local government in Victoria.

The framework includes four indicator sets covering service performance, financial performance, sustainability and governance, providing a comprehensive picture of Council's performance. These indicators and measures are reported on throughout the following sections of this report. Comments are provided to assist in understanding the results where there may be a material variation between this year's results and the previous year. Knox

Theme 1
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Highlights

- Improved walking and cycling connections through shared path upgrades.
- Supported local businesses through networking and business upskilling opportunities.
- Promoted library programs, events and technology support services.

Strategic objective

Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel better supported and more informed. They will be able to access the jobs, services, and the nutrition they need to sustain a healthy, and satisfying lifestyle.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
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.	
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.	

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources (continued)

Our community can **access important local services and resources** through Council's delivery, advocacy, and partnerships.



What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Implement Economic Development's 2025-26 events program to strengthen capacity building for local businesses.	The 2025-2026 Economic Development Events Program has been delivered, providing a range of networking and business capability building opportunities for local businesses. Sessions included Human + AI: Creating Strategic Content That Converts, Numbers & Networking: EOFY Tips and Local Connections, and Marketing When Customers Are Spending Less. The program supported local businesses to build capability, strengthen skills, expand professional networks, and respond to evolving market conditions.	✓
Promote Your Library activities, programs and events that focus on lifelong learning, increase social connection and improve access to technology.	Council and Your Library continue to work collaboratively through regular programming meetings to align library activities with Council's strategic objectives. Council actively promotes Your Library programming and many activities are delivered in partnership between Council and Your Library. In response to community demand, Your Library has expanded programming at Rowville library to increase access to technology support services.	✓
Lead and deliver the Knox Food Relief Taskforce and actively participate and contribute to the Knox Emergency Relief Network.	The Knox Food Relief Taskforce continues to progress actions from its workplan, including engaging with local businesses and planning a winter tin food donation drive. The Taskforce also continues to inform Councils advocacy efforts with State and Federal government on food relief and related community needs. Council remains an active participant in the Knox Emergency Relief Network and continues to support collaboration across the sector. Council promoted the winter tinned food drive and the recent Outer East Homelessness Round Table.	✓
Improve our shared path network through new and renewed upgrades including the Liverpool Road shared path.	The Knox Cycling Action Plan continued to guide shared path priorities. Council completed the Green Spine shared path on Chandler Road in Boronia and delivered the first stage of the Liverpool Road shared path. Further stages of the Liverpool Road shared path are planned to commence in 2026-2027, subject to final delivery requirements. Council progressed design, scoping and investigation work for future shared path improvements, including Brenock Park Drive, Railway Trail connections in Upper Ferntree Gully, Railway Parade and the Stud Road service road in Scoresby.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources (continued)

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Advocate for enhanced bus service frequency and coverage across the Knox network and for release of the business case for transport options in the Caulfield-Rowville corridor.	Council continued to advocate for more frequent and better connected bus services across Knox through ongoing engagement with the Department of Transport and Planning and participation in the Eastern Transport Coalition. Council supported regional advocacy priorities, including improved bus connections between Vermont South, Mountain Highway and Bayswater, investigation of a Bayswater to Stud Park bus link via Henderson Road, and identification of safer arterial road crossings to improve access to frequent bus services. Council also continued to advocate to seek the release of the business case for transport options in the Caulfield to Rowville corridor. Ongoing coordination with State Government project teams, including the Boronia Station Precinct Upgrade, supported integrated transport, and improved access, safety and community connections across Knox.	✓
Finalise and commence implementation of a Cemetery Landscape Masterplan to guide development of new ashes interment areas that meet community needs while complementing the existing amenity of the cemetery.	Procurement for concept design services for new niche walls and memorial elements has been completed, supporting the next stage of implementation of the Cemetery Landscape Masterplan. The engagement of design services will assist in progressing detailed concepts, exploring design options and ensuring proposed memorial elements align with the Masterplan objectives, operational requirements and the future needs of the cemetery.	✓
Collaborate with Yarra Ranges Shire and Maroondah City Council to develop the Bayswater Business Precinct Spatial Plan.	Council officers continue to collaborate with Yarra Ranges Shire and Maroondah City Council in the development of the spatial plan for Bayswater Business Precinct. The draft spatial plan is expected to be presented for Council endorsement by December 2026 for the purpose of community and stakeholder engagement.	✓

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025-26 Target range	2025-26 Result	Comment
Kilometres of new active transport network in Knox aligned with the Knox Cycling Action Plan and other active transport plans.	**2 kms**	**2.8 Kms**	Council delivered 2.8 kilometres of new active transport infrastructure in line with the Knox Cycling Action Plan and other active transport priorities. Key projects completed included new footpaths, shared path connections, mobility improvements and road safety upgrades.
Community satisfaction with bike and shared paths (both on road and off-road and including shared paths).	79-80	**79**	Community satisfaction with bike and shared paths was 79 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.
Community satisfaction with the maintenance and repair of sealed and local roads.	68-70	**75**	Community satisfaction with sealed local roads was 75 which is a "very good" level of satisfaction.
Number of visits to libraries in the Knox municipality.	625,000-640,000	**778,592**	The 2025-2026 result was significantly higher than the annual target. This increase is largely due to the continued success of Knox Library Ngarrgoo.
Community satisfaction with local library services.	8.5-8.6	**8.7**	Community satisfaction with library services was 8.7 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.
Number of planning permits issued for commercial, office or retail use and development.	130-150	**85**	There has been a steady decline in planning applications (commercial) over the past four years. This trend is likely influenced by broader macroeconomic factors, including increased construction and material costs, as well as ongoing cost-of-living pressures that are affecting business investment and expansion decisions.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources (continued)

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Value of grants provided to emergency relief organisations.	$100,000	**$100,000**	The Emergency Relief Grant was established with an annual allocation of $100,000. This grant stream was exhausted in 2025-26 with all grant money going to Emergency Relief organisations with the City of Knox.
Self-reported health status of Knox residents.	36%-38%	**37%**	This figure is obtained from the Victorian Population Health Survey which is undertaken every 4-6 years. The latest figures are from 2023 and state that the 'self-reported health status of Knox residents is excellent/very good 37.2%'. The next survey is expected to be undertaken in 2026 with data released in 2027.
Amount of gross regional product (GRP) ($) generated by businesses in Knox.	$9.4B-$9.7B	**$10.31B**	Knox City Council's Local Industry Gross Regional Product was $10.31 billion for the year ending June 2025. This is the most recent data available, with Economy ID expected to receive the first Local Government Area estimates for 2025-2026 GRP in April 2027.
Community satisfaction with Council services and facilities.	7.7-7.9	**8.0**	Community satisfaction with Council services and facilities was 8.0 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Libraries					
Resource Currency **Recently purchased library collection** [Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years/Number of library collection items] x 100	77.00%	78.60%	74.64%	**70.00%**	The number of library items purchased has decreased due to rising acquisition costs and the need to replace ageing digital resources. A significant number of eBooks and eAudiobooks purchased during the COVID-19 period have now reached five years of age and require replacement or renewal. At the same time, increases in the retail price of library materials and supplier processing costs mean that the available budget purchases fewer items. Consequently, the average age of the library collection is increasing.
Service Cost **Cost of library service per population** [Direct cost of library service/Municipal population]	$23.68	$22.25	$22.85	**$23.01**	The cost of the library service has increased slightly from the previous year.
Utilisation **Library loans per population** [Number of collection item loans/Municipal population]	N/A	8.84	9.41	**10.02**	Digital loans have been increasing steadily over the years but for the first time physical loans have also increased for Knox by 1.4%. This is largely due to the continued success of Knox Library Ngarrgoo.
Participation **Library membership** [Number of registered library members/ Municipal population] x 100	N/A	28.92%	36.99%	**45.20%**	This increase in library membership is largely due to the continued success of Knox Library Ngarrgoo. Over 10,000 new Members have joined at the branch in 2025-26.

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Participation **Library visits per head of population** [Number of library visits/Municipal population] x 100	N/A	**3.58**	**4.69**	**4.75**	The increase in the number of library visits is largely due to the continued success of Knox Library Ngarrgoo which opened in March 2024. Your Library continues to deliver a high-quality library service.
Roads					
Satisfaction of use **Sealed local road requests** [Number of sealed local road requests/ Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	58.30	46.41	36.73	**37.51**	Council includes all requests received from external customers (via customer service requests or after-hours requests) that relate to the quality of the sealed road surface and kerb and channel. Requests are counted regardless of whether a maintenance activity is required to be undertaken in accordance with Council's service levels.
Condition **Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards** [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council/Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	95.28%	91.18%	90.92%	**90.83%**	The condition of Council's road network has remained steady, as confirmed by the 2023-24 full road condition audit. These audits are conducted every four years, with the next scheduled for 2026-27. Council maintains high road service standards and is progressively addressing renewal backlogs.
Service Cost **Cost of sealed local road reconstruction** [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction/Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	$183.11	$152.30	$150.27	**$182.73**	Total costs are based on the relatively small number of road reconstructions undertaken and vary according to the extent of reconstruction specified for each project. The increase in cost of sealed local road reconstruction for 2025-26 is due to the rise in materials cost due to the conflict in the middle east.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Cost of sealed local road resealing [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing/ Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	$26.50	$31.41	$32.38	**$32.98**	The cost of sealed local roads has slightly increased in 2025-26.
Roads Satisfaction **Satisfaction with sealed local roads** [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	55	67	68	**75**	Satisfaction with sealed local roads increased by 7 points from 2025.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Cemetery This service is responsible for the management and operation of the Ferntree Gully Cemetery, including grounds maintenance and care, administration, interment and memorialisation services, safety and security.	Budget Actual **Variance**	94 78 **16**
Economic Development This service provides advice and support to help businesses grow and succeed. In addition, this service supports the development of the local economy by attracting businesses and investment in key areas. It includes but is not limited to providing an initial point of contact for business permit support, providing advice and information, managing and promoting business networking events.	Budget Actual **Variance**	837 714 **123**

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources (continued)

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Health This service is responsible for health planning, promotion and education, as well as the prevention of adverse health outcomes through initiatives and enforcement. It includes, but is not limited to immunisation services, investigation of complaints, education and development of health facilities.	Budget Actual **Variance**	502 444 **58**
Libraries This service includes 5 libraries that provide a range of services and programs, including access to books and resources, internet, photocopiers, school holiday activities, and book club events.	Budget Actual **Variance**	5,227 5,657 **(430)**
Roads & Transport This service supports the safe movement of people and vehicles throughout Knox, by planning for the renewal and maintenance of roads, footpaths, bike paths and street lighting. Other services include traffic control and parking management, behavioural change programs, and advocacy for improved state roads and transport infrastructure.	Budget Actual **Variance**	7,269 7,092 **177**



Theme 2
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity



Highlights

- Strengthened partnerships supporting kindergarten children and families.
- Delivered programs that strengthened community connection across generations.
- Continued work towards reconciliation and stronger engagement with our multicultural community.

Strategic objective

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel valued, connected and included

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
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.	

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity (continued)

Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating **opportunities to actively participate, connect and learn**.



What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Consider the child perspective in service delivery, decision making and design through a Child Friendly Cities Education Campaign to build capability of our staff.	Stage 2 of the Child Friendly Cities initiative has commenced, focusing on learning and capacity building for Council staff. An internal working group representing a range of service areas has been established, and a workplan developed to support ongoing staff education, awareness and information sharing across the organisation. Remaining activities will continue through 2026-2027 early years actions.	✓
Deliver the 2025-26 actions of the Alcohol Statement of Commitment implementation plan.	The Knox Local Drug Action Team met with representatives from community health, women's health services, and prevention and response organisations. The group progressed planning for community engagement to better understand alcohol-related harm experienced by mothers and women who are carers in Knox. A Community Action Plan grant application was submitted, and Council is awaiting the outcome.	✓
Partner with our diverse and multicultural community, key services and networks to support and celebrate our diversity, including the coordination of the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing and Multicultural Advisory Committees.	The Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee continued to provide advice and input throughout the year. To streamline engagement and encourage participation, the June committee meeting was rescheduled and replaced by a joint Advisory Committee meeting in July 2026. The Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee met regularly. Members provided feedback on Cultural Services planning, gender equality and family violence prevention initiatives, the development of Committee priorities for 2026, and the proposed Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee eNewsletter. Members were also invited to participate in Community Day at Westfield Knox to strengthen connections with community organisations and stakeholders. These activities provided valuable insights that will help shape Council's future programs, communications and engagement with multicultural communities.	✓
Review the Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 and develop the next iteration of the plan.	Actions under the Knox Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 were implemented and reviewed at the conclusion of the Plan. A review report was presented to Council in September 2025. The new Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2030 has been presented to Council and is expected to be endorsed in 2026-2027.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity (continued)

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Deliver volunteer training sessions and promote opportunities to strengthen social and community networks and reduce loneliness.	The Community Training Program delivered 17 community training sessions, supporting local community groups, volunteers and organisations to build their knowledge and capacity across a broad range of topics. Training topics included: • Running a Successful Community Group/Sporting Club • Safe Food Handling • Child Safe Training (two sessions) • Managing Challenging Member and Volunteer-Related Situations • Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency (two sessions) • Cultural Awareness • 3Rs of Family Violence • Volunteering – Recruitment and Retention • Fundraising for Community Groups • Grant Writing • Social Media • Social Media Consultancy • Three Knox City Council Grant Information Sessions 299 participants attended, with strong participation in the Council Grant Information Sessions (63 attendees across three sessions) and continued demand for governance, grants, child safety and cultural competency training. In addition, 15 Community Strengthening e-bulletins were distributed, including three special editions, to nearly 800 subscribers. These e-bulletins provided information on funding opportunities, training, networking events and other resources relevant to community organisations.	✓
Undertake the Knox Aquatics Feasibility Study.	The Feasibility Study has been split into two stages. Stage 1 involved an extensive technical assessment of the site, which included information relating to underground services. These details required review by an external consultant and are informing the strategic review (Stage 2), which is progressing well. The review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2026-2027.	●

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Deliver targeted programs for priority population groups, including intergenerational initiatives, for example an annual fishing program, to strengthen community connections.	Planning for the intergenerational program between Swinburne TAFE Certificate II in Community Service studies with secondary school students has been completed, with sessions commencing in July 2026. The program was developed through collaboration between Swinburne staff, a retirement village lifestyle coordinator and an intergenerational specialist, creating a new approach to engaging students from across Knox secondary schools. Residents experiencing loneliness and social isolation have been invited to participate, with program outcomes helping to inform future work with tertiary education providers. 168 programs were delivered, reaching more than 4,700 community members and strengthening community connections.	✓
Deliver the bi-annual Youth Summit to hear from the voices of young people on issues which are important to them.	Youth Services delivered the Youth Summit in August 2025 for young people aged 12 to 18 years. Every secondary school in Knox was invited, with six schools represented on the day. 68 students registered and 50 attended. The event was supported by 16 Youth Advisory Committee members. Key topics discussed included life skills and education, outdoor and recreation activities and how Council communicates with young people. Youth Services will use these insights to guide service delivery for the next 18 months. In September, two young people presented the Summit outcomes to Councillors, and their contribution was well received. Youth Services is also working with Council's Communications and Engagement team to develop a plan to engage the 16-to-25-year age group in further consultation opportunities.	✓
Strengthen the ongoing partnership with sessional kindergarten providers operating from Council facilities through enhancement of processes and partnership meetings.	Partnership activities continued throughout the year. Attendance and participation from key kindergarten stakeholders and supporting sector regulators remained a key strength of the partnership model. This sharing of practice provided a strong foundation for ongoing work to support the provision of kindergarten into the future	✓

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity (continued)

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Deliver sporting club capacity-building sessions in partnership with key stakeholders.	Stage 2 of the Child Friendly Cities initiative commenced, focusing on learning and capacity building for Council staff. An internal working group representing a range of service areas has been established, and a workplan developed to support ongoing staff education, awareness and information sharing. Remaining activities will continue through 2026-2027 early years actions.	✓

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Participation of young people in Youth Services programs.	7,500-8,000	**14,745**	Program participation was strong, with larger than predicted engagement by young people in Pop-Up Youth Hives. Participation was particularly strong in the second half of the year, with May being the busiest month for the period, contributing to a result that significantly exceeded the annual target.
Participation in social inclusion programs and intergenerational initiatives.	4,000-4,200	**4,701**	Participation rates have exceeded the target for this performance measure.
Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities, festivals, and events.	8.0-8.2	**8.4**	Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities, festivals, and events was 8.4 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.
Number of health promotion initiatives targeted at reducing alcohol-related harm.	8-9	**8**	There were 8 health promotion initiatives targeted at reducing alcohol-related harm delivered.

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Number of volunteers that attend volunteer training and education. 	275-325	**320**	The total number of attendees was 320, an increase of 54 from 2024-2025. Attendees per session averaged 19, on par with 2024-2025. We held 17 sessions in, an increase from 15 in the previous year.
Participation of people living with disability and their carers in targeted events, programs and professional development opportunities. 	1,800-2,000	**2,797**	Participation significantly exceeded the target range, with 2,797 attendances recorded. This demonstrates the continued demand for inclusive events, programs and support groups delivered for people living with disability, their carers, and educators who access Council's professional development programs.
Number of residents accessing the Knox community transport bus outings. 	5,000-5,500	**6,075**	Community transport use increased this year, with a higher number of clients enjoying outings and community organisations hiring the buses for excursions.
Community Satisfaction with services for youth. 	8.0-8.1	**8.1**	Community satisfaction with services for youth was 8.1 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.
Community Satisfaction with sports ovals and other outdoor sporting facilities. 	8.2-8.3	**8.2**	Community satisfaction with sports ovals and other outdoor sporting facilities was 8.2 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.
Number of upgrades that provide for gender inclusion in Council owned pavilions. 	1-2	**4**	Seebeck Reserve, Park Ridge Modular Pavilion, Wally Tew Pavilion and Tormore Reserve Pavilion were upgraded.



Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity (continued)

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Service Standard **Infant enrolments in the MCH service** [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received)/Number of birth notifications received] x 100	100.98%	100.73%	100.57%	**100.98%**	Engagement in the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service is strong. Community members continue to be responsive to the MCH service in its entirety with infant enrolments remaining stable throughout 2025-26. (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.)
Service Cost **Cost of the MCH service** [Cost of the MCH service/Hours worked by MCH nurses]	$90.25	$86.44	$104.23	**$110.11**	The cost of the MCH service increased in 2025-26 due to staff shortages resulting in fewer hours worked by MCH nurses.
Participation **Participation in the MCH service** [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year)/Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	75.84%	77.21%	75.36%	**73.47%**	Team members are focusing on completing missed visit reports and ensuring those clients that have missed visits are invited to reschedule and attend their appointments.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Participation **Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children** [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100.	85.71%	81.63%	78.08%	**71.24%**	Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children decreased slightly in 2025-26. Proactive engagement has supported First Nations participation in the MCH service. We are constantly exploring engagement strategies to build collaboration and encourage participation.
Participation **Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit** [Number of 4-week Key Age and Stage visits/ Number of birth notifications received] x 100	98.70%	98.33%	102.37%	**101.50%**	Council has 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.)
Aquatic Facilities					
Service Standard **Health inspections of aquatic facilities** [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities/Number of Council aquatic facilities]	2	2	2	**1**	The aquatic facility received one inspection during 2025-26. Inspection frequency is determined by a risk-based approach that considers compliance history, operational factors, and available regulatory resources. Based on these considerations, one inspection was needed and undertaken during the year.
Utilisation **Utilisation of aquatic facilities** [Number of visits to aquatic facilities/ Municipal population]	2.03	2.09	2.22	**2.33**	Knox Leisureworks recorded 382,115 visits 2025-26.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Service Cost **Cost of aquatic facilities** [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received/Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	$1.55	$0.07	$0.71	**$0.70**	The cost of providing aquatic services remains consistent with the previous year.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Arts & Culture This service focuses on arts and cultural programs to build community connections, contribute to community identity, and promote cultural diversity. It includes but is not limited to development and management of arts and cultural venues, identifying and managing community resources, and delivering public art projects and community functions.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,616 1,603 **13**
Early Years These services are designed to support children's development and family needs, including Maternal and Child Health (MCH), Early Childhood Education and Care, playgroups, and inclusion support services.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,897 2,827 **70**
Festivals & Events This service provides free community events that are family friendly, promotes connectivity, and celebrates community life. It includes but is not limited to supporting community run events, delivering major festivals and pop-up programs, and coordinating citizenship events.	Budget Actual **Variance**	719 755 **(36)**

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Seniors This service provides a range of programs to assist residents aged 65 years and over, to live independently and safely in their homes. Support includes food services, occupational therapy, home modifications and maintenance, and housing support. In addition, this service supports seniors' clubs, social connections, active ageing programs, carers, people with disability, community transport, short term support, and planning for an ageing community.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,790 2,569 **221**
Social Research, Policy & Planning This service conducts a range of in-depth research and planning for social policy, strategic and local area plans to enable Council and community partners to make informed decisions to improve community health and wellbeing. Areas include gender equity, community access and inclusion, reconciliation, social and affordable housing, community development and mental health.	Budget Actual **Variance**	3,503 3,202 **301**
Sports & Leisure This service supports community sporting and leisure clubs through planning, advocacy and consultation on facility and venue development. It provides training opportunities and funding support for minor projects. This service also manages sport and leisure facilities, either directly or through partnerships with other organisations.	Budget Actual **Variance**	4,756 4,421 **335**
Youth This service seeks to support physical, social and mental wellbeing of young people through programs and advocacy. It includes but is not limited to providing individual and group support programs, school focused youth care, and family support.	Budget Actual **Variance**	768 591 **177**

Theme 3
Caring for and enhancing our environment

Highlights

- Delivered a range of environmental events to help sustain biodiversity resilience.
- Progressed sustainability initiatives supporting Council's net zero commitment.
- Advanced planning for the future of Knox's open spaces.

Strategic objective

Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will be able to enjoy the benefits of a well maintained and sustainable environment to support their mental health and vitality.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
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.	
Strategy 3.3 Minimise waste to landfill through access to a suite of waste services and education.	
Strategy 3.4 Energy consumption and the use of renewable energy resources are positively impacted through investment in assets, education, planning and advocacy.	


Our environment is **greener, healthier and sustainable** through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.
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Caring for and enhancing our environment (continued)

What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Finalise the first draft of the 10-year Open Space Strategy.	An initial draft of the Open Space Strategy was developed. A Councillor briefing held on 13 April 2026 outlined the draft community values, strategic principles and key community feedback received. Further community consultation will occur to help refine the draft, the Strategy will be updated and is then expected to be presented to Council for endorsement in 2026-27.	✓
Deliver the year two funded actions of the Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 Action Plan.	Various year two actions were delivered. The Gardens for Wildlife program celebrated its 20th anniversary, while work continued on the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Framework in partnership with the University of Melbourne. A Nature Conversations community co-design workshop was delivered, and the Nature Stewards Program received positive feedback from participants. Community planting events were held for World Environment Day and at Koolunga Native Reserve, supporting community participation in biodiversity and environmental stewardship.	✓
Deliver the annual Sustainability Initiatives of Council's Capital Works Program to reach net zero emissions by 2030.	Sustainability Initiatives were completed and included projects such as: • efficiency upgrades to lighting and air conditioning at Knox Civic Centre • lighting replacement at several outdoor car parks including Wally Tew Reserve and Pickets Reserve • the installation of pool blankets to the 50m Pool at Knox Leisureworks • lighting upgrades to Knoxfield Tennis Club	✓
Conduct the mid-term review of Council's Climate Response Plan 2021-2031.	The mid-term review of Council's Climate Response Plan was completed with the draft to be presented to Council for consideration in July 2026.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Advocate to Federal and State Governments to reconsider the kerbside glass only service reform, in favour of an expanded Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) to enhance glass recycling and reduce cost to the Knox community.	Knox is among 39 Victorian councils calling on the State Government to delay the mandatory rollout of a costly fourth glass bin. Community feedback from our 2025 Waste Service Review showed that homes in Knox have less than 10 glass items to recycle per week. This suggests a fourth household bin dedicated solely to glass recycling would not be well utilised. Knox residents responded to the "Let's be clear on glass" community survey and the results will be provided to the State Government for review. The 39 Councils are recommending expansion of the CDS to include wine and spirit bottles and an extension of the July 2027 deadline for the glass-only kerbside service. This would allow sufficient time to fully explore alternative options.	✓
Progressively replace fleet vehicles with zero/low emission vehicles.	New fleet assets are being purchased to reduce council's environmental footprint. Electric Vehicles (EV's) and hybrid vehicles are being considered for dedicated pool and passenger fleet.	✓
Participate in the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processes Project Oversight Group, to oversee facility construction and report back to Council.	Knox City Council is involved in ongoing discussions following the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decision in April that will impact the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processes Project. Knox is a part of the South East Council landfill user group and there is a working group tasked with preparing a report investigating the impacts of the landfill and transfer station capacity after the closure of Veolia Hallam.	✓

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025-26 Target range	2025-26 Result	Comment
Community satisfaction with the provision and maintenance of parks and gardens.	7.8-8.0	**8.1**	Community satisfaction with the provision and maintenance of parks and gardens was 8.1 which is an "excellent" level of satisfaction.

Caring for and enhancing our environment (continued)

Performance measure	2025-26 Target range	2025-26 Result	Comment
Net change in Council trees (planted vs removed).	1,250-1,350	**1,298**	Council planted 2,372 trees and 1,074 trees were removed. This is a net gain of 1,298 trees.
Waste diverted from landfill.	72-74	**71%**	The diversion rate is relatively consistent with the previous year. The diversion rate has been impacted by the successful uptake of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), which has shifted recyclable materials away from Council's collection system, and 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. The diversion rate of 71% continues to place Knox as a leading Council in reducing waste to landfill and in a strong position to achieve state and Council goals on this key environmental indicator.
Council's greenhouse emissions (CO2 equivalent).	1,800-1,850	**2,610**	Council's greenhouse emissions (Scope 1 and 2) have reduced by 60% over the past five years. This is largely due to all Council electricity now being supplied by renewable energy from a Victorian wind farm, which has almost eliminated Scope 2 emissions. While emissions from electricity have reduced significantly, emissions from fuel and gas use have increased by approximately 7% compared to the previous 12 months. The 2025-26 result remains above the target range of 1,800 to 1,850, as the pace of fleet electrification and the transition away from gas continue to present challenges. Scope 1 and 2 emissions included in this measure are the focus of Council's Net Zero by 2030 target as they are within Council's direct control and influence.
Electrification of Council Buildings (removal of gas connection and/or solar installation and/or battery connection).	3-5 buildings per financial year	**3**	HV Jones Pavilion, Wally Tew Pavilion and Tormore Reserve Pavilion were fully electrified.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Waste Management					
Service Standard **Kerbside collection bins missed** [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed/ Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000	1.80	0.38	0.26	**0.51**	Confirmed missed bin incidents remain low. The increase in missed collections can be attributed to general fluctuations in resident behaviour, as well as adjustments to the way these requests are administered and managed following the introduction of Council's 'Close the Loop' project. Council will continue to manage this through strong contract management and continuous improvement in partnership with the contractor and community.
Service Cost **Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service** [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service/ Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	$124.06	$80.09	$91.32	**$103.89**	The volume of garbage collected has remained relatively stable. However, costs have increased compared to the previous reporting period, primarily due to a significant increase in the landfill levy applied to landfill disposal (collected by the State Government)
Service Cost **Cost of kerbside recyclables bin collection service** [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service/ Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	$66.41	$65.13	$64.40	**$56.56**	The cost of the kerbside recyclables collection service declined in 2025-26 due to lower processing fees under the new processing contract which commenced in December 2025.

Caring for and enhancing our environment (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Waste Diversion **Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill** [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins/Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100	53.12%	72.87%	71.21%	**70.79%**	The diversion rate is relatively consistent with the previous reporting period. The diversion rate has been impacted by the successful uptake of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), which has shifted recyclable materials away from Council's collection system, and 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. The diversion rate of 71% continues to place Knox as a leading Council in reducing waste to landfill and in a strong position to achieve state and Council goals on this key environmental indicator.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Fleet, Plant & Machinery This service is designed to ensure that the Council's Fleet, Plant, and Machinery are effectively managed in a sustainable manner. It encompasses activities such as timely servicing, repair, and capital renewal for each resource, thereby promoting their longevity and operational efficiency.	Budget Actual **Variance**	(381) (734) **353**
Open Space & Biodiversity This service focuses on improving and managing an integrated network of public open spaces, including the protection and enhancement of a network of habitat corridors across Knox. The service utilises research and best practice to support the local flora, fauna and ecosystems that contribute to a healthy natural environment. In addition, it manages and preserves trees and vegetation in public areas.	Budget Actual **Variance**	15,256 13,664 **1,592**

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Sustainability & Climate Response This service is responsible for guiding Council and the community's response to climate change, including energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives, community education, and engagement programs on environmental sustainability and climate mitigation.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,004 911 **93**
Waste This service is responsible for the collection and disposal of kerbside waste, recyclables, green organics and hard waste. Other services include clearing and maintenance of public litter and recycle bins, waste collection from Council venues, landfill rehabilitation, waste management planning, waste education, and compliance with legislated waste reforms.	Budget Actual **Variance**	25,623 24,348 **1,275**
Waste & Drainage This service develops strategies to plan and manage stormwater drains and protect water quality in urban areas, including promotion of Water Sensitive Urban Design, flood mapping, supporting stormwater and wastewater management.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,948 2,707 **241**



Theme 4
Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Highlights

- Adopted the 2026-2027 Annual Budget to support community services and infrastructure.
- Developed Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035 to guide long-term infrastructure investment.
- Improved access to Council information through a review of communication channels.

Strategic objective

Our community feels empowered, heard, and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel heard and considered which will enhance community cohesion and a sense of belonging.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
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.	


Our community feels **empowered, heard, and has trust in Council** through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.
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Leading, listening and governing responsibly (continued)

What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Optimise Council's key communication channels to ensure our customers have easy access to relevant and timely information.	The review of Council owned communication channels has been completed for Knox News print magazine, eNewsletter, roadside banners, the Have Your Say website and on hold messages. The review process included completing Equity Impact Assessments to ensure the needs of different audiences were considered. Reviews were also completed for external communication channels that Council regularly utilises including digital screens, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station screens, community newspapers, and the Mayor's radio segment. Findings from the reviews will inform the development of guides, documenting processes, monitoring and evaluation measures and actions for improvement. This work aligns with the Digital Roadmap and Social Media Framework.	✓
Deliver the year one actions of Council's Organisation Strategy 2025-29.	Our Organisation Strategy focuses on five key themes. It encourages our people to be customer centric, people focused, financially sustainable, change ready and outcomes driven. Nine of the ten actions within the Organisation Strategy were completed, and the remaining action will be carried forward to 2026-27.	●
Complete a community engagement program to inform Council's Annual Budget 2026-27.	Community engagement for the Annual Budget and Action Plan was undertaken between 28 July and 24 August 2025 with 594 responses from community members and eight formal submissions. The engagement activities were focused on understanding how we can best meet community needs under each theme of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan, community ideas for actions or projects in a specific location in Knox and the services our community think deliver most value. Engagement activities included an online survey, five pop-up events across the municipality and targeted events at the hubs and with the multi-advisory committee. The community engagement report was presented to Council at the Council Meeting on 29 September 2025 with formal submissions heard on 1 October 2025. The feedback received informed the development of the Annual Budget 2026-27.	✓
Develop and endorse Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.	Council adopted the Asset Plan 2025-2035 on Monday 27 October 2025.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Develop and endorse Council's Annual Budget 2026-27.	The 2026-2027 Annual Budget was adopted by Council on 22 June 2026.	✓
Finalise the platform tender process for Core Business Systems to integrate technology systems into a single source of truth, optimising efficiency, cybersecurity and productivity.	The tender was finalised and the contract was awarded to the preferred tenderer on 24 December 2025.	✓
Develop and launch a Continuous Improvement Framework and Year 1 program of initiatives to improve customer experience, staff experience, and operational efficiency.	The Continuous Improvement Framework and associated roadmap were endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team in May 2026. The program has now been launched, with the prioritisation of improvement projects underway to support the delivery of ongoing improvements across Council.	✓
Actively pursue and participate in collaborative procurement opportunities to maximise contract outcomes.	Council continued to pursue collaborative procurement opportunities to achieve improved contract outcomes and value for money. This included participation in collaborative procurement activities for Traffic Management and IT Operations Management services. Council will continue to review procurement opportunities and where appropriate, align contracts with broader Eastern Region collaborative arrangements to support efficiency, consistency and value for money outcomes.	✓

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025-26 Target range	2025-26 Result	Comment
Community satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement.	6.9-7.1	**7.2**	Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement was 7.2 which is a "good" level of satisfaction.

Leading, listening and governing responsibly (continued)

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Adjusted underlying Surplus.	9.15%	**4.69%**	The adjusted underlying surplus for the 2026 financial year was 4.69%. The major variance to budget in the adjusted underlying result was the $11.7 million variance for the net gain (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, including a timing difference in land and building sales totalling $10.0 million which are now set to proceed during the 2027 financial year. Partially offsetting this was an increase of $8.3 million for depreciation due to the impact of *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* which contributed to an increase of $253.0 million in the value of Council assets as at 30 June 2025 (after the adoption of the budget for the 2026 financial year).
Community satisfaction with Council having a sound direction for the future.	6.7-6.9	**7.1**	Community satisfaction with Council having a sound direction for the future was 7.1 which is a “good” level of satisfaction.
Community satisfaction with Council’s representation, lobbying, and advocacy on behalf of the community.	6.7-6.9	**7.1**	Community satisfaction with Council’s representation, lobbying, and advocacy on behalf of the community was 7.1 which is a “good” level of satisfaction.
Community satisfaction with Customer Service.	7.7-7.9	**7.7**	Community satisfaction with Customer Service was 7.7 which is a “very good” level of satisfaction.
Community satisfaction with Council’s overall performance.	6.9-7.1	**7.2**	Community satisfaction with Council’s overall performance was 7.2 which is a “good” level of satisfaction.
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public.	4%-6%	**4%**	Council continues to strive to limit the number of decisions made in meetings closed to the public as much as possible. Seven resolutions were made in closed meetings of Council during 2025-26.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Governance					
Transparency **Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public** [Number of Council resolutions made at ordinary or special meetings of Council, or at meetings of a special committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public/Number of Council resolutions made at ordinary or special meetings of Council or at meetings of a special committee consisting only of Councillors] x 100	4.20%	4.44%	2.25%	**3.98%**	Council continues to strive to limit the number of decisions made in meetings closed to the public as much as possible. Seven resolutions were made in closed meetings of Council during 2025-26.
Consultation and Engagement **Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement** [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	53	69	69	**72**	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement increased by 3 points from 2025.

Leading, listening and governing responsibly (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Attendance **Councillor attendance at Council meetings** [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each ordinary and special Council meeting/ (Number of ordinary and special Council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x 100	91.27%	88.44%	92.42%	**94.67%**	Attendance increased slightly from the previous year.
Service Cost **Cost of elected representation** [Direct cost of the governance service/ Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]	$61,954.22	$67,233.73	$66,598.26	**$73,651.68**	The cost of elected representation has increased due to an increase in councillor training and education, as expected in the first full year of the council term.
Satisfaction **Satisfaction with Council decisions** [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	54	69	66	**71**	Satisfaction with Council decisions increased by 5 points from 2025.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost	
Customer Service The service supports the organisation in providing personalised, responsive customer service via all Council's contact channels. The team provides support for all customer interactions and exists to support information and connection between Council and the community.	Budget Actual **Variance**	5,445 4,757 **688**
Data, Information & Technology The Information Technology service provides computer hardware, software, telecommunications, business information and systems analytics, project and business improvement services to support the organisation to deliver Council services in accordance with City and Council Plan.	Budget Actual **Variance**	11,632 10,580 **1,052**
Finance The Finance Department provides the strategic thinking, leadership, service delivery and management of all matters relating to financial management, involving budgeting and forecasting, regular financial reporting, Annual Financial Accounts preparation, rating services and management of the creditors and debtors.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,565 2,466 **99**
Governance The Governance service works across the organisation to advise, educate and build the capacity of Councillors and staff to promote and achieve good governance in Council's operations and more broadly, engage with the community to encourage greater participation in local democracy.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,882 1,682 **200**
People This Service provides a range of strategic and operational functions that are aimed at ensuring that Council's human resource (HR) activities, programs, and strategies enhance staff performance and realise Council's Vision.	Budget Actual **Variance**	5,820 4,441 **1,379**
Procurement To ensure procurement activity is conducted in a honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, delivering best value for money outcomes with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic and governance objectives and legislations.	Budget Actual **Variance**	813 932 **(119)**
Risk Management This service is responsible of the identification, assessment and management of potential risks that may impact the Council's operations, providing a systematic and proactive approach to managing risks, with the ultimate goal of protecting the Council's interests.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,796 2,494 **302**
Strategy & Performance Provides leadership, guidance and direction for the planned and measurable delivery of Council's Vision. This is achieved through: strategic planning, corporate planning, service planning & review, portfolio and change management, performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and business improvement projects.	Budget Actual **Variance**	2,465 2,517 **(52)**

Theme 5
Being a strong voice for safety



Highlights

- Delivered community safety initiatives in partnership with local agencies and Victoria Police.
- Raised awareness of family violence prevention and support services.
- Developed a draft Public Lighting Policy to improve safety in public spaces.

Strategic objective

Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will feel safer and more resilient, knowing that the Council is working together with community and agencies to create safe places and spaces and promote respect

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
Strategy 5.1 Our community feels safer in public spaces and facilities through planning, maintenance, education, design and proactive program delivery for Council owned and 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.	


Our community feels **safe, respected and supported** in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.
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Being a strong voice for safety (continued)

What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Partner with key stakeholders to deliver community safety programs and initiatives that improve perceptions of safety and neighbourhood connection.	Three Knox eNews articles were published between April and June 2026, with a cumulative 380 click throughs. Council delivered an internal and external session titled *'Understanding the Youth Crime Narrative'* in June 2026, attended by 27 participants. The *'Keeping Knox Safer'* round table was held in May 2026, bringing together 44 participants from a range of services across Knox and State Government. Three *Cuppa with a Cop* sessions were also attended by Council officers in collaboration with Victoria Police.	✓
Deliver year two of the Free From Violence project.	Year two of the project was completed in March 2026 and year three of the Free From Violence project commenced in April 2026 following approval by Department of Families, Fairness and Housing of the Project Plan. The Free From Violence project saw the activation of a major family violence awareness and help seeking campaign across a number of settings within Knox, including sporting clubs and stadiums, early years settings, neighbourhood houses, opportunity shops, licenced venues as well as through billboards and roadside banners. An event to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was delivered on 24 June 2026 to promote gambling harm awareness and the link to elder abuse. Planning is underway for education sessions to be rolled out in Quarter 1 to meals on wheels volunteers, library staff, sporting clubs and Council staff.	✓
Celebrate the achievements of women and progress towards gender equality through the delivery of International Women's Day event and 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in partnership with our community.	Council delivered a range of initiatives to celebrate the achievements of women and promote gender equality, including International Women's Day events and activities delivered through the 16 Days of Activism campaign. Delivered in partnership with community organisations, regional councils, Knox Libraries and other stakeholders, these initiatives supported community awareness, encouraged respectful relationships and strengthened understanding of gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence. Planning commenced for 2026-27 activities, including the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, and Councils participation in the *Put Her Name On It* program to support recognition of women's contributions and promote gender equality within the community.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Complete the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-29.	The development of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2025-2029 was finalised and endorsed by Council on 23 February 2026.	✓
Develop a first draft of a Public Lighting Policy for Knox to extend usable hours and improve perceptions of safety in public spaces.	A first draft of the Public Lighting Policy for Knox was developed following a review of public lighting policies from other municipalities and input from the project working group. Officers are reviewing the draft to consider policy scope, public safety outcomes, asset and maintenance implications, implementation requirements and alignment with the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. Feedback from the internal review will inform further refinement of the draft before presentation to Council for consideration.	✓
Participate in the Eastern Metropolitan Council's Emergency Management Partnership in order to deliver a collaborative approach to regional emergency preparation and preparedness.	Knox City Council signed a new partnership agreement with the EMCEMP Councils, including ongoing funding for the next four years to enable a collaborative approach to regional emergency preparation and preparedness. Under this new partnership, officers will continue to participate in the collaboration.	✓

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Perception of community safety in public areas of Knox.	7.9-8.1	**8.2**	The perception of community safety in public areas of Knox exceed the target.
Perception of community safety at home.	8.2-8.3	**8.3**	The perception of community safety at home met the target.

Being a strong voice for safety (continued)

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Number of days taken to follow up a major or critical food notification or outbreak.	1-2	**1**	Follow ups on major or critical food notification or outbreak continue to be conducted within one day of notification.
Percentage of high-risk buildings (large public buildings such as shopping centres, aged care facilities, hospitals or entertainment venues) audited annually, for compliance with safety requirements.	30%-35%	**30%**	The audits undertaken are a mix of proactive and reactive reviews of high-risk buildings. The bulk of the audits relate to high-risk combustible cladding buildings located within Knox that have been referred to the Knox Building team by Cladding Safety Victoria.
Animal Management Prosecutions.	95%-100%	**100%**	Council prosecutes serious offences under the Domestic Animals Act, as well as matters involving repeat offenders who consistently show irresponsible pet ownership. The Council has maintained a 100% success rate in its prosecutions.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Animal Management					
Timeliness **Time taken to action animal management requests** [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests/ Number of animal management requests]	3.06	4.35	3.89	**3.30**	All animal management requests are assessed based on risk and addressed in a timely manner. Council prioritises all dogs at large, animal collections, attacks, rushes and animal cruelty requests, acting on them immediately. The figure for this period is consistent with the previous year.
Service Standard **Animals reclaimed** [Number of animals reclaimed/Number of animals collected] x 100	47.48%	41.22%	49.19%	**36.40%**	Council endeavours to reunite dogs and cats with their owners. Registered animals can generally be reunited quickly where owner details are available, while unregistered animals require further efforts to identify owners. The number of animals reclaimed fluctuates from year to year, depending on the number of requests received from residents who have found an animal and the circumstances resulting in an animal being impounded. In 2025–26, Council experienced an exceptionally high number of surrenders relating to semi-owned cat populations (stray cats being fed and accommodated), which reduced the overall percentage of animals reclaimed.

Being a strong voice for safety (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Service Standard **Animals rehomed** [Number of unclaimed collected animals rehomed/Number of unclaimed collected animals] x 100	36.43%	64.04%	61.78%	**59.38%**	The number of animals rehomed has remained steady in comparison with the previous reporting period. Where animals have not been reclaimed by their owner, all efforts have been made to find a suitable new home in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act and the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats. The proportion of unclaimed animals rehomed has remained relatively stable.
Service Cost **Cost of animal management service per population** [Direct cost of animal management service/ Municipal population]	$8.08	$8.10	$9.22	**$9.33**	The cost of the animal management service has remained relatively stable. This reflects Council's ongoing commitment to delivering statutory animal management responsibilities, including animal registrations, community education, compliance activities, and animal welfare services. The result reflects the resources required to maintain service levels while responding to operational demands and meeting legislative obligations.
Service Standard **Animal management prosecutions** [Number of successful animal management prosecutions/Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	91.67%	100.00%	100.00%	**100.00%**	Council prosecutes serious offences under the Domestic Animals Act, as well as matters involving repeat offenders who consistently show irresponsible pet ownership. The Council has maintained a 100% success rate in its prosecutions.
Food Safety					
Timeliness **Time taken to action food complaints** [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints/ Number of food complaints]	1.97	2.48	1.48	**1.73**	Food complaints continue to be actioned as a priority. Maintaining timely action on food-safety concerns is essential for protecting public health, so this trend highlights an opportunity to review workflows and ensure responsiveness remains strong.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Service Standard **Food safety assessments** [Number of class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 (Vic)/Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the *Food Act 1984 (Vic)*] x 100	101.11%	97.91%	95.39%	**100.12%**	Inspections were completed for class 1 and class 2 premises this year.
Service Cost **Cost of food safety service** [Direct cost of the food safety service/Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the *Food Act 1984 (Vic)*]	$1,128.87	$1,058.61	$367.93	**$331.29**	The decrease in the cost of food safety service is attributable to an increase in the number of registered food premises during the reporting period, resulting in a lower direct food safety service cost per premises.

Being a strong voice for safety (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results				Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026	
Health and Safety **Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications** [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up/Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about food premises] x 100	99.40%	100.00%	100.00%	**98.02%**	All critical non-compliance notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises were followed up, except for the five premises that closed before the follow up.
Health and Safety **Food safety samples** [Number of food samples obtained/ Required number of food samples] x 100	N/A	111.96%	106.10%	**100.00%**	All required food sampling was completed.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost	
Community Laws The service contributes to our community's safety and liveability by managing local laws, including nuisance complaints, parking compliance and animal management.	Budget Actual **Variance**	409 182 **227**
Community Safety This service contributes to the safety and well-being of the community. These services include, but are not limited to funding community safety initiatives, promoting safe driving, coordinating safety, resourcing of school crossings, initiatives to reduce alcohol and gambling related harm, and support services for people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,632 1,645 **(13)**
Emergency Management This service is responsible for emergency preparedness, response and recovery in Knox, by working closely with emergency state agencies. In addition, this service inspects properties at risk of bushfires and helps property owners mitigate bushfire risk.	Budget Actual **Variance**	352 276 **76**
Food Safety This service manages food safety standards in the business industry, ensuring businesses are compliant to food safety regulations and tobacco compliance program. It also includes, but is not limited to, inspections and enforcement.	Budget Actual **Variance**	460 312 **146**
Statutory Building This service is responsible for managing building assessment and building compliance for property development. It includes, but is not limited to providing advice, assessing applications, issuing permits, enforcement, and protection of adjoining properties.	Budget Actual **Variance**	755 1,276 **(521)**

Theme 6
Planning our future city



Highlights

- Advocated for safe and affordable housing in Knox.
- Progressed plans to support Bayswater's future growth and development.
- Improved accessibility through inclusive design of Council facilities.

Strategic objective

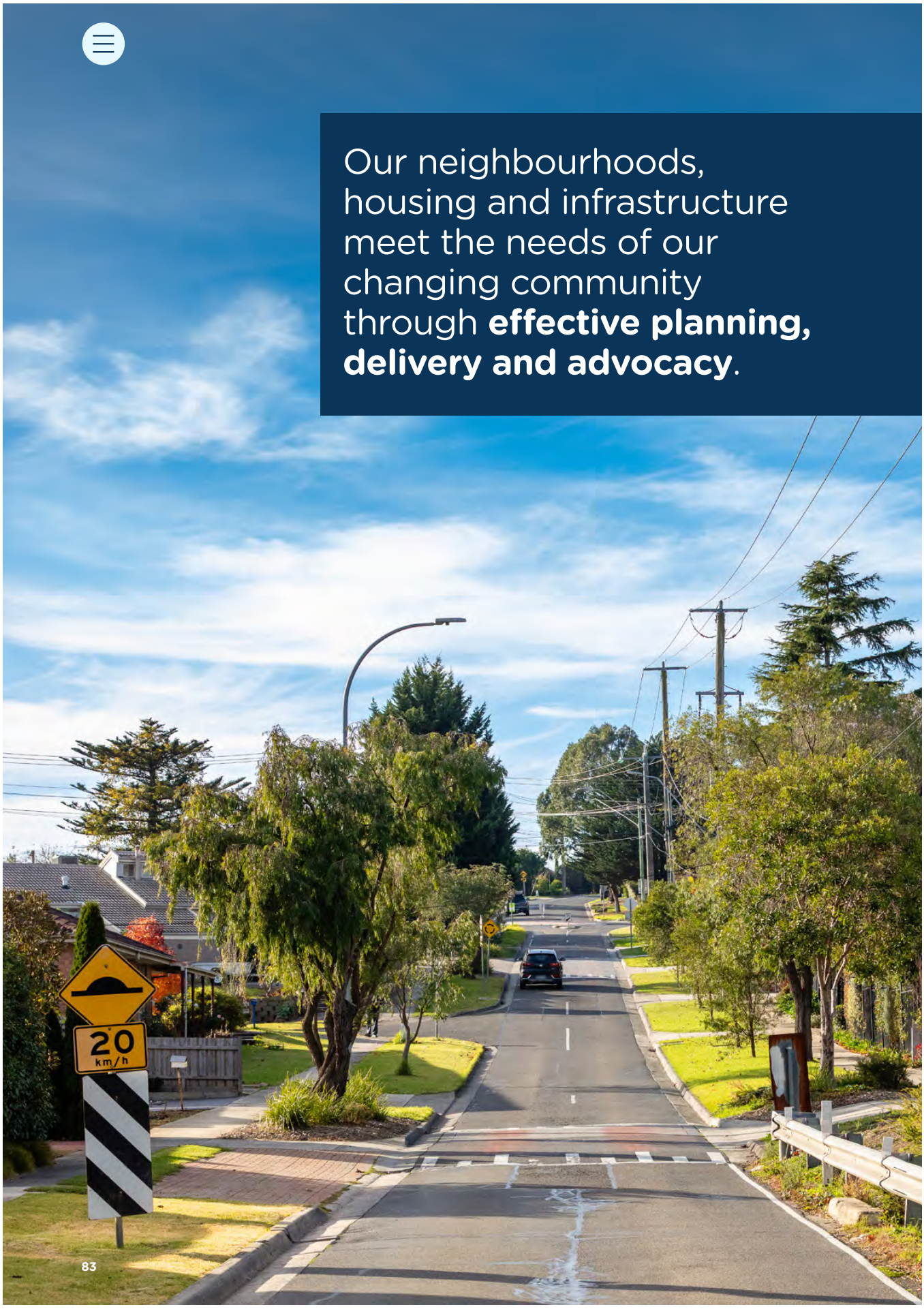
Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

Delivering on health and wellbeing commitment

Our Knox community will be able to fully enjoy their local area, knowing that what they need now and into the future has been considered and planned. They will feel proud of where they live.

Strategies

Strategies	Health & wellbeing priority
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.	


Our neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through **effective planning, delivery and advocacy**.
20
km/h
83

Planning our future city (continued)

What we achieved in 2025-2026

Progress of our actions identified in Year 1 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Deliver the year three actions of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2023-2027.	The mid-term review of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2023-2027 was presented to Council in November and received positive feedback. The actions identified during the associated Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) commenced. The implementation group meet quarterly to monitor progress and support delivery of the identified actions.	✓
Commence preparation of the Knox Housing Strategy review following release of the new Plan for Victoria and State housing targets to ensure that Knox is well placed to respond to legislative change and market demands.	This project continues to be rescoped in response to planning reform being progressed by the State Government. Delivery was significantly delayed awaiting the release of the housing modelling tool required to determine the distribution of State Government-allocated housing targets. The tool was released in February 2026, enabling the next phase of the project to proceed.	✓
Prepare the Bayswater Renewal Strategy Planning Scheme Amendment for implementation into the Knox Planning Scheme.	Preparation of documentation associated with the planning scheme amendment was completed, including a response to a request for further information from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) regarding the amendment. Council is awaiting final authorisation from DTP before presenting a report to Council to note the planning scheme amendment documentation prior to public exhibition of the amendment in 2026-2027.	✓

Legend

✓ Complete ● Behind schedule

Actions	Comments	Progress Status
Advocate and provide support for eligible community members over 55 to access safe and affordable housing.	Council officers continue to work with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to support older residents to access affordable housing. In response to increasing numbers of visible homelessness, Council sent a targeted advocacy letter to the Minister for Housing advocating for State Government funding to support homelessness outreach services in Knox, following the identification of a gap in funding for these services within the municipality. The State Government advised that the 2026-2027 Budget includes funding for homelessness and housing support services in areas where services are currently unfunded or where additional investment is required due to increasing levels of homelessness. Advocacy for safe and affordable housing will continue.	✓
Assess building condition audit data and create renewal programs to align with building hierarchy and the long-term financial plan.	A prioritised renewal program has been prepared utilising the 2024 building condition audit data. This renewal program aligns with building hierarchy and the long-term financial plan.	✓
Review the Public Toilet Policy and develop the next iteration of the Policy and Implementation Plan.	The Draft Public Toilet Management Policy and Draft Public Toilet Management Plan were completed and will be presented to Council in 2026-2027.	✓
New or upgraded Council facilities are designed to be Disability Discrimination Act compliant.	All building works undertaken in the Capital Works Program requiring a building permit were compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), as required under the Building Regulations, ensuring inclusive and accessible design.	✓



Planning our future city (continued)

The difference we're making

Progress against the performance measures identified in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Performance measure	2025-26 Target range	2025-26 Result	Comment
Community satisfaction with planning for population growth.	6.0-6.5	**6.8**	Community satisfaction with planning for population growth was 6.8 which is a "good" level of satisfaction.
The number of one- and two-bedroom dwellings approved in planning permits.	50-60	**72**	The result exceeded the annual target.
Extent of housing development that is consistent with housing strategy expectations.	66%-76% alignment	**77%**	In 2025, 77% of new dwelling approvals were consistent with their designated Housing Strategy Area, representing a 9% increase from 68% in 2024. This is the third-highest level of alignment recorded since 2016 and is above the 10-year average of 74%.
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low- and low-income earners – sales.	3.2%-3.5%	**4%**	3.5% of housing sales in Knox in the 12 months to December 2025 were affordable for low-income households and 0.4% of sales were affordable for very low-income households. There is a 6-month lag for this data as this comes from a non-Council dataset.
Percentage and proportion housing defined as affordable for very low- and low-income earners – rentals.	44%-47%	**24%**	23.7% of rentals in Knox in the 12 months to December 2025 were affordable for low-income households and 0.3% were affordable for very low-income households.

Performance measure	2025–26 Target range	2025–26 Result	Comment
Percentage of Asset Renewal Program completed.	85%-95%	**100%**	The Capital Works Renewal Program expended $31.83m out of the $31.96m amended budget which equates to a 99.6% completion delivery rate. This is across renewal programs for Bridge, Road Sub Structures, Road Surface, Drainage, Water Sensitive Systems, Footpath, Shared Path, Building, Active Reserves, Road Furniture, Carpark, Plant, Playground, Passive Open Space and Artwork.

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

This section contains the results of prescribed service performance indicators and measures of the LGPRF aligned to this key direction

Service/indicator/ measure	Results				Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026	
Statutory Planning					
Timeliness **Time taken to decide planning applications** [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	49	49	47	**55**	The median number of days to process a planning application saw an increase in 2025-26. This was due to significant changes to the planning system which resulted in temporary delays in processing, and a significant increase in tree removal applications.
Service Standard **Planning applications decided within required timeframes** [Number of planning applications decisions made within 60 days for regular permits and 10 days for VicSmart permits/Number of planning applications decisions made] x 100	71.12%	77.55%	76.73%	**72.22%**	The percentage of planning applications decided within the legislated timeframe decreased slightly in 2025-26.

Planning our future city (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026	Comment
Service Cost **Cost of statutory planning service** [Direct cost of statutory planning service/Number of planning applications received]	$1,844.44	$2,772.89	$2,698.32	**$2,353.24**	The direct cost of the statutory planning service per planning application received was $2,353.24, which was a slight reduction from the cost in 2024-25.
Decision-making **Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT** [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decisions in relation to statutory planning/ Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x 100	16.67%	50.00%	33.33%	**50.00%**	There were 4 appeals with decisions made by VCAT between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, not including 4 appeals that were withdrawn/struck out or settled by consent. Of the 4 appeals, 2 were not set aside. 2 of the 4 applications with appeals were reported to Council.

Services

The services funded in the 2025-2026 Budget.

Service/Description	Net cost Budget Actual Variance $'000	
Capital Works Planning This Service aims to manage the Council's capital works and support the delivery of services to the community.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,304 1,061 **244**
Property & Facilities This service manages Council's properties, including usage, renewal and maintenance, land management, and removal of graffiti vandalism	Budget Actual **Variance**	5,159 5,784 **(625)**
Statutory Planning This service is responsible for providing planning advice and assessment of planning permit applications, including community engagement and planning enforcement.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,818 2,778 **(960)**
Strategic Land Use Planning This service provides strategic and land use planning services, including development of planning controls within the Knox Planning Scheme, to guide land use and development that responds to Knox's housing, economic and environmental needs.	Budget Actual **Variance**	1,913 1,224 **689**

Governance and management checklist

No	Governance and management items	Assessment
1	**Community Engagement Policy** (policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 22 July 2024
2	**Community Engagement Guidelines** (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	No guidelines **Reason for no guidelines:** The guidelines were reviewed as part of the updated policy in 2024 and it was identified that the policy was adequate and therefore these guidelines were retired.
3	**Financial Plan** (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 23 June 2025 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Financial Plan 2025-2035: 23 June 2025
4	**Asset Plan (2025-2035)** (plan that sets out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 27 October 2025 Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020 Date of adoption: 27 October 2025
5	**Revenue and Rating Plan** (plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 23 June 2025
6	**Annual Budget** (plan setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required)	Adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 23 June 2025

No	Governance and management items	Assessment
7	**Risk Policy** (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Current policy in operation **Date of commencement:** 24 June 2024
8	**Fraud Policy** (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Current policy in operation **Date of commencement:** 26 May 2025
9	**Municipal Emergency Management Planning** (participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee)	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year **Dates of MEMPC meetings attended:** 15 September 2025 24 November 2025 16 March 2026 15 June 2026
10	**Procurement Policy** (policy outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council)	Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act **Date of adoption:** 27 June 2022
11	**Business Continuity Plan** (plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Current plan in operation **Date of commencement:** 30 March 2020
12	**Disaster Recovery Plan** (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Current plan in operation **Date of commencement of IT Disaster Recovery Plan:** 21 May 2026
13	**Complaint Policy** (policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints)	Developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act **Date of commencement:** 28 August 2023
14	**Workforce Plan** (plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation)	Developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act **Date of commencement:** 31 December 2021
15	**Payment of rates and charges hardship policy** (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates)	Current policy in operation **Date of commencement:** 23 August 2021

Governance and management checklist (continued)

No	Governance and management items	Assessment
16	**Risk Management Framework** (framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Current framework in operation **Date of commencement:** 24 June 2024
17	**Audit and Risk Committee** (advisory committee of Council under sections 53 and 54 of the Act)	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act. **Date of establishment of Audit and Risk Committee:** 24 August 2020 **The revised Audit and Risk Committee Charter was adopted by Council on:** 26 May 2025
18	**Internal Audit** (independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)	**Date of engagement:** 6 February 2024
19	**Performance Reporting Framework** (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Current framework in operation **Date of adoption:** 23 June 2025 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Financial Plan 2025-2035: 23 June 2025
20	**Council Plan Report** (report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first 6 months of the financial year)	Current report **Date of report:** 23 February 2026
21	**Quarterly Budget Reports** (quarterly reports to the Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	No reports presented to Council.
22	**Risk Reports** (six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Risk reports prepared and presented **Dates of reports:** 27 August 2025 10 December 2025 5 March 2026 11 June 2026

No	Governance and management items	Assessment
23	**Performance Reporting** (six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Performance reports prepared **Dates of reports:** 25 August 2025 23 February 2026
24	**Annual Report** (annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	Annual Report presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act **Date of presentation:** 27 October 2025
25	**Councillor Code of Conduct** (code setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters)	Observed in accordance with section 139 of the Act IN FORCE - Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2024-10-26.pdf
26	**Delegations** (documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff)	Delegations reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act **Dates of reviews:** • Council to CEO:15 October 2025 • CEO to Staff – VicSmart – 29 October 2025 • Council to Staff - Planning: 27 January 2026 • Council to Staff - Cemeteries and Crematoria: 23 February 2026 • CEO to Staff – CEO Powers: 3 May 2026 • CEO to Staff – Sub Delegation: 3 May 2026
27	**Meeting Procedures** (Governance Rules governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Governance rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act **Date rules adopted:** 26 March 2024

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.

Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

14 September 2026

Council operations

Governance

Knox City Council is a municipal council for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic), which prescribes its role as providing good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of leadership as the key to ensuring the community's priorities are met. The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes, which include community consultation, public forums and the ability to make submissions to Council on a range of matters.

Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to Council's CEO and other staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), adopted Council policies, instruments of delegation and Council's Budget. Knox's formal decision-making processes are conducted through Council meetings.

This Annual Report has been prepared according to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).

Council meetings

Council meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Additional Council meetings can be called for specific purposes if required.

Meetings are held at the Knox Civic Centre located at 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, and are open to the public except in specific circumstances (for example, where the meeting is closed to consider confidential information).

The *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) was amended in 2022 to enable Council meetings to be conducted virtually through electronic attendance, and/or in the absence of a public gallery, provided they are livestreamed or recorded, which is Council's practice and is reflected in Council's Governance Rules. Council meetings throughout 2025-2026 were conducted in person in a hybrid format, with some Councillors and staff attending in person and some attending virtually. Monthly meetings also provide an opportunity for community members to submit a question to Council and to speak to their question.

The following tables provide a summary of Councillor attendance at Council meetings for the 2025-2026 financial year.

Meetings of Council in 2025-2026

Committee	Cr Lockwood	Cr Kennett	Cr Duncan	Cr Williams	Cr Baker	Cr Considine	Cr Cooper	Cr Pearce	Cr Atwell
Meetings held in 2025-2026	23	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Attendance in 2025-2026	21	25	25	25	24	23	23	24	23

Delegated Committee Meetings

Knox City Council has no delegated committees.



Council operations (continued)

Other Committee Meetings

In addition to the regular meetings of Council, Councillors are appointed to various internal and external committees.

The following tables provide a summary of Councillor attendance at committee meetings for the 2025-2026 financial year.

Committee	Cr Lockwood	Cr Kennett	Cr Duncan	Cr Williams	Cr Baker	Cr Considine*	Cr Cooper	Cr Pearce	Cr Atwell
Audit and Risk Committee		3/3					3/4	1/1	
Knox Community Awards Committee				1/1					1/1
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee	4/4	4/4	3/4	3/4	4/4	2/4*	3/4	2/4	3/4
Transformation Governance Committee		4/4	4/4						
Early Years Advisory Committee		2/5				4/5			
Youth Advisory Committee			7/11	8/11					
Active Ageing Advisory Committee					4/5	2/3		2/2	
Environment Advisory Committee	5/6	4/6							
Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee							1/2		0/1
Knox Disability Advisory Committee					5/6			1/2	1/4
Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee	3/5					5/6			
Arts and Culture Committee	3/3								1/1
Recreation and Leisure Committee		3/4	4/4					2/3	1/1

* Attended as an observer.

Councillor Allowances

In accordance with Section 39 of the Act, Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a councillor.

The annual rate of allowances paid to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors are fixed by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal. The allowances in effect pursuant to the Tribunal's Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination are detailed in the following table:

Effective date	Allowance for mayors	Allowance for deputy mayors	Allowance for councillors
1 July 2025	$142,661	$71,329.00	$41,992.00
18 December 2025	$146,319	$73,159	$41,992

The following table contains details of the allowances paid to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors during the year.

Councillors	Allowance Paid
Cr Paige Kennett, Chandler Ward Mayor: November 2025 - June 2026 Councillor: July 2025 - November 2025	$114,100.56
Cr Chris Duncan, Collier Ward Deputy Mayor: November 2025 - June 2026 Councillor: July 2025 - November 2025	$63,542.53
Cr Peter Lockwood, Baird Ward	$35,095.26
Cr Robert Williams, Dinsdale Ward	$42,161.15
Cr Meagan Baker, Dobson Ward	$42,161.15
Cr Parisa Considine, Friberg Ward	$42,161.15
Cr Lisa Cooper, Scott Ward Mayor: July 2025 - November 2025 Councillor: November 2025 – June 2026	$73,048.19
Cr Susan Pearce, Taylor Ward*	$42,551.85
Cr Glen Atwell, Tirhatuan Ward Deputy Mayor: July 2025 - November 2025 Councillor: November 2025 – June 2026	$51,079.00

* Note that an overpayment of $390.70 was made to Cr Pearce. An adjustment will be made to Cr Pearce's allowance to correct the overpayment in the 2026/2027 financial year.

Councillor Expenses

In accordance with Section 40 of the Act, Council is required to reimburse a Councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing their duties as a Councillor. Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. The policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties. Council publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including the reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor and member of a Council committee paid by Council. Council is also required to make available a 'minimum toolkit' of resources for Councillors, including computers, phones and a vehicle for the Mayor.

Expenses for July 2025 - June 2026

Ward	Performance of the role	Professional development	Travel	Grand total
Baird	$1,196.05	$0.00	$286.21	$1,482.26
Chandler	$4,292.50	$14,965.91	$12,046.43	$31,304.84
Collier	$3,742.11	$4,034.09	$634.28	$8,410.48
Dinsdale	$1,139.95	$0.00	$0.00	$1,139.95
Dobson	$2,050.30	$800.00	$37.83	$2,888.13
Friberg	$1,099.16	$0.00	$0.00	$1,099.16
Scott	$1,100.68	$2,446.36	$6,566.91	$10,113.95
Taylor	$1,428.05	$0.00	$318.71	$1,746.76
Tirhatuan	$1,116.92	$0.00	$302.21	$1,419.13
Total	**$17,165.72**	**$22,246.36**	**$20,192.58**	**$59,604.66**

Vehicle Expenses

Cr Lisa Cooper (Scott Ward) **Mayor: 1 July 2025– 20 November 2025**	Monthly Vehicle Expense	$6,418.63
	Fuel Expenses	$340.21
	Maintenance Expenses	$407.50
	Toll Expenses	$205.99
	Total	**$7,372.33**
Cr Paige Kennett (Chandler Ward) **Mayor: 21 November 2025–30 June 2026**	Monthly Vehicle Expense	$10,086.41
	Fuel Expenses	$841.94
	Maintenance Expenses	$329.32
	Toll Expenses	$46.88
	Total	**$11,304.55**

Councillor travel expenses include expenses for a fully maintained vehicle provided for the Mayor.

Depreciation, maintenance, registration and insurance costs are apportioned to the Mayor of the day on an annualised, pro-rata basis. Fuel, maintenance and toll expenses are allocated to the Mayor of the day as incurred.

Audit operations

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) has been established to strengthen Council's governance, risk management and financial management as well as driving continuous improvement.

The ARC is an independent advisory committee, established under section 53 of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic). The ARC consists of three independent members and two Councillors. Independent members are appointed for a maximum term of six years. The chair is elected from amongst the independent members.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee oversees and monitors the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management, good corporate governance, maintaining an effective system of internal control and risk management and fostering an ethical environment.

The functions and responsibilities of the ARC are set out in a Charter approved by Council which establishes the committee's role to support Council in discharging its oversight and accountability responsibilities related to:

- Compliance with Council's policies, procedures and governance principles,
- Overarching governance principles,
- The effectiveness of Council's system of internal controls, including fraud and corruption prevention,
- Council's risk management framework,
- Financial and performance reporting,
- Internal and external audit functions,
- Statutory and legislative compliance.

ARC meetings are held quarterly, or more frequently as determined and the committee reports on its operations to Council biannually.

Council members of the Audit and Risk Committee during 2025-2026 were:

- Cr Lisa Cooper (From July 2025 to June 2026,
- Cr Susan Pearce (From July 2025 to November 2025).
- Cr Paige Kennett (From November 2025 to June 2026)

Independent external members were:

- Mr Geoff Harry (Chair July 2025 to September 2025), (Member July 2025 to September 2025)
- Mr Mick Jaensch (Interim Chair August 2025 to December 2025), (Member July 2025 to May 2026),
- Mrs Suzie Thoraval (Chair December 2025 to July 2026), (Member August 2025 to June 2026),
- Mr Jonathan Kyvelidis (November 2025 to June 2026)

The ARC met on four occasions during 2025-2026 and received reports on a range of matters relevant to the achievement of its annual work plans. These included oversight of the internal audit program delivered by contractors HLB Mann Judd, who presented internal audit reports into:

- Waste Management.
- Review of Leases and Licenses,
- Assurance Mapping,
- Payroll (incl. data analytics),
- Privacy & Artificial Intelligence.

Internal and External Audits

The audit function provides independent and objective assurance that the appropriate processes and controls are in place across Council. Council uses the services of an external provider who has extensive local government experience to carry out the internal audit function.

The risk-based three-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan is revised annually to ensure that the audit resources remain focused on the appropriate areas. The review process considers:

- Council's risk framework,
- The Council Plan,
- The impact of any change on operations, systems or the business environment,
- Prior audit coverage,
- Outcomes and management input.

The audit plan is reviewed and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) annually.

The internal auditor attends Committee meetings as required to report on the status of the audit plan, provide an update on the implementation of audit recommendations, and present the findings of completed reviews. All audit issues identified are risk rated. Recommendations are assigned to the responsible officers and tracked through Council's internal compliance framework. Each year, external auditors from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office prepare an external audit plan and an independent audit report on Council's financial and performance statements.

Public transparency

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) s 57, members of the public are provided with access to a range of Council documents via Knox City Council's website: Access to Council documents | Knox.

Our Public Transparency Policy can be accessed from the same page.

Statutory information

Knox City Council conducts its operations in accordance with the laws of the state of Victoria. The major statutes are listed below (the list is not exhaustive).

Local Government Act 1989 and Local Government Act 2020

Together, these Acts provide the overarching legislative framework for the establishment, governance, and operations of Victorian councils. Under these Acts, Knox City Council is empowered to deliver services, govern effectively, and act in the best interests of its community. Council's compliance with the requirements of these Acts underpins all aspects of its strategic planning, service delivery and decision-making.

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

According to the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council, throughout the municipality:

- Provides for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage,
- Empowers traditional owners as protectors of their cultural heritage on behalf of Aboriginal people and all other peoples,
- Strengthens the ongoing right to maintain the distinctive spiritual, cultural, material and economic relationship of traditional owners with the land and waters and other resources with which they have a connection under traditional laws and customs, and
- Promotes respect for Aboriginal cultural heritage, contributing to its protection as part of the common heritage of all peoples and to the sustainable development and management of the land and of the environment.

Aged Care Act 2024

As the provisions of this Act indicate, Knox City Council is committed to:

- Providing services, programs, activities and events that promote active ageing, social connection, and participation in the community,
- Supporting older residents to maintain their independence and continue to live at home,
- Facilitating both formal and informal opportunities for older people to contribute to the design, review and improvement of programs and services for seniors,
- Delivering of the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) that recognises the rights of older people to make informed decisions about the care and services they receive,
- Encouraging and supporting older people to provide feedback, raise concerns and make complaints about the services we deliver, and
- Using the feedback, we receive to continuously improve the quality and accessibility of the activities, services and events we offer.

Key initiatives include the following

- **Active Ageing Advisory Committee:** A committee comprising community representatives, Council officers and Councillors that provides advice and recommendations to inform Council's decision-making regarding positive ageing services, programs and emerging issues affecting residents aged 55 years and over.
- **Commonwealth Home Support Program:** Delivering of the federal government funded support to eligible residents. Services provided include occupational therapy, delivered meals, home adjustments and home maintenance.

- **Legislative Compliance:** Review and alignment of Community Access and Support policies, procedures and work instructions to meet the requirements of the new Act and associated reforms.
- **Community Education and Communication:** Provision of information to Knox residents accessing aged care services regarding the new Aged Care Act 2024, Strengthened Aged Care Standards, Statement of Rights and whistle-blower protections to Knox residents accessing aged care services.
- **Sector Collaboration:** Membership of the Sector Support Development Communities of practice, and
- **Community Awareness:** Delivery of education sessions on the aged care reforms and aged care services to regional volunteer networks and seniors groups.

Through these initiatives, Knox City Council supports older people to exercise choice and control, maintain independence, and remain active and connected members of the community. This reflects Council's commitment to delivering inclusive, person-centered services that promote dignity, participation and quality of life for older people.

Building Act 1993

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council is responsible for administering and enforcing building control functions within the municipality, including compliance with building standards and safety requirements.

Carers Recognition Act 2012

As the provisions of this Act indicate, Knox City Council, in relation both to its staff and its customers:

- Recognises, promotes and values the role of people in care relationships,
- Recognises the different needs of persons in care relationships,
- Supports and recognises that care relationships bring benefits to the persons in the care relationship and to the community, and
- Enacts care relationship principles to promote understanding of the significance of care relationships.

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council operates on the principles that:

- Human rights are essential in a democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of law, human dignity, equality and freedom,
- Human rights belong to all people without discrimination, and the diversity of the people of Knox enhances our community,
- Human rights come with responsibilities and must be exercised in a way that respects the human rights of others, and that
- Human rights have a special importance for the Aboriginal people of Knox, as descendants of Australia's first people, with their diverse spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional lands and waters.

While the Charter protects a range of human rights, those rights may be subject to reasonable and justified limitations under law, taking into account the nature of the right, the purpose of the limitation, and whether the limitation is proportionate to achieving its purpose.

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council:

- Protects the rights of children and families and, to the greatest extent possible, encourages their participation in any decision-making that affects their lives,
- Acknowledges and is respectful of the child's individual identity, circumstances and cultural identity and is responsive to the particular needs of the child,
- Makes decisions about intervention by the providers of services into a child's or family's life and about access by a child or family to those services in a timely manner being mindful of any harmful effects that may be caused to the child by a delay in making decisions or providing services,
- Ensures that families are made aware of the services available to them and of the benefits these services can provide, especially to those families in most need of assistance, and

Statutory information (continued)

- Co-operates with other services or professionals to work in the interests of the child and family.
- Council's activities and performance in the management of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) are measured and reported on annually under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (see page 52 of this report).

Disability Act 2006

As the provisions of this Act indicate, Knox City Council is committed to:

- Advancing the inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability with the aim of achieving their individual aspirations,
- Being flexible and responsive to the individual needs of persons with a disability,
- Maximising the choice and independence of persons with a disability, and
- Enabling persons with a disability to access services as part of the Knox community and foster collaboration, coordination and integration with other local services.

Knox City Council is committed to creating an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming community for all. To support the rights and needs of people with disabilities, their families, and carers, Council developed the Knox Connection, Access, Respect, Equality and Safety Strategy 2022-2027, which outlines actions to build a safer, healthier, and more inclusive Knox for everyone.

Council offers a wide range of inclusive and accessible services to support the entire community, including targeted programs for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Key initiatives include the following.

- **Early Years Support:** Professional development for Knox Early Years Services to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities or developmental delays.
- **Family and Carer Support:** Information sessions, carer groups, and exercise programs to build capacity, health, and social connection.
- **Wheelie Bin Assistance:** Help for people with disabilities and frail aged who cannot manage bin collection.
- **Building Accessibility:** Allocation of dedicated capital works funding to retrofit Council facilities for improved access.
- **Disability Advisory Committee:** Bi-monthly meetings with people with disabilities, carers, and industry representatives to inform Council decision-making.
- **Disability Information:** Provision of resources including the People First Guide and Accessing Knox email newsletter.
- **Disability Partnerships:** Collaboration with local service providers and councils to enhance regional inclusion.
- **Community Celebrations:** Recognition and celebration of Carers Week and of the International Day of People with Disability.
- **Inclusive Events:** Accessibility features at Knox festivals, such as access guides and Changing Places facilities.
- **Forums, Webinars and Information sessions:** On topics such as carer supports, mental health first aid, relationships, sexuality and pornography, supporting autistic young people, planning for the future, and inclusive recreation expo.
- **Library Services:** Accessible offerings such as home delivery, tactile/audio/large-print books, captioned DVDs, and assistive technology.
- **Access Guides:** Access Key guides for local venues and events to support individuals with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments.

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council is responsible for the promotion of animal welfare, the responsible ownership of dogs and cats and the protection of the environment throughout the municipality. In addition, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years, the plan to be reviewed and, if appropriate, amended annually.

During 2025-2026, Council delivered the final-year actions of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025. Council also undertook community consultation and developed the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029, which was adopted by Council in February 2026 to guide animal management priorities over the next four years.

The DAMP focuses on the management of cats and dogs and provides the strategic framework, advocacy program, and action plan that guides Council's animal management services. The plan promotes responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, while protecting the community and environment from nuisance caused by dogs and cats.

The plan focuses on the following areas:

- Promoting and encouraging responsible ownership of dogs and cats,
- Encouraging the registration and identification of dogs and cats,
- Minimising the risk of attacks by dogs on people and other animals,
- Minimising the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance,
- Addressing the issue of over-population and the high euthanasia rates of cats and dogs,
- Managing dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs in the municipality,
- Inspecting and ensuring domestic animal businesses comply with legislated requirements,
- Providing training for Council's authorised officers, and
- Other domestic animal matters.

Key achievements included:

- Successful prosecution of nine dog attack matters in the Magistrates' Court.
- Development and adoption of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029.
- Partnership with The Vet Project, a mobile desexing service, which attended the Knox area and provided discounted desexing services for 20 cats.
- The conduct of proactive patrols in Council parks and reserves to address dogs off lead, unregistered pets, and dog litter issues.
- A review of Council animal registration data of non-residential areas to identify non-declared guard dogs.
- The promotion of responsible pet ownership at the annual 'Pets in the Park' community event held in March 2026.
- Investigation of all reported animal management issues, ensuring responsive and consistent enforcement.
- Provision of cat traps to residents experiencing cat nuisance issues.
- Delivery of staff training, covering animal management practices, conflict management, situational awareness, and harm reduction strategies.

These actions have contributed to improved community safety, increased awareness of responsible pet ownership, and continued progress towards achieving the objectives of the DAMP.

The planned activity to reconcile data contained in national microchip registries with Council's registration database was not undertaken during the reporting period due. This activity remains a priority and is scheduled to be progressed in the following reporting period.

Emergency Management Act 2013

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council has responsibilities for planning, responding to, and recovering from emergencies within the municipality. Council maintains a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and works in partnership with emergency services, government agencies, and community organisations to promote community resilience and ensure readiness in the event of natural disasters or other emergencies.

Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council shares responsibility with the state government for the protection of human health and the environment from pollution and waste throughout the municipality.

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

As the provisions of this Act indicate, Knox City Council, in relation both to its staff and its customers, is committed to:

- Eliminating discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation, to the greatest possible extent,

Statutory information (continued)

- Promoting and protecting the right to equality set out in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, and
- Encouraging the identification and elimination of systemic causes of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

Food Act 1984

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council must ensure that food for sale throughout the municipality is both safe and suitable for human consumption and prevent misleading conduct in connection with the sale of food. Council's activities and performance in this area are measured and reported on annually under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (see pages 78 to 80 of this report).

Freedom of Information Act 1982

Under the provisions of this Act, members of the public have a right to access documents in Council's control, subject to certain limitations. Council is committed to facilitating access to documents in accordance with the Act, while balancing transparency and accountability with the need to protect confidential or otherwise exempt information. Details of our public access channels are provided in the 'Public Transparency' section of this report (page 101).

Gender Equality Act 2020

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council is taking positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and is promoting gender equality in its policies, programs and services. Knox City Council conducts a biennial workplace gender audit, submitted to the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, and its Gender Equality Action Plan is available on the Council website: Gender Equality Action Plan | Knox.

Health Records Act 2001

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council promotes fair and responsible handling of health information by:

- Protecting the privacy of an individual's health information held by Council,
- Providing individuals with a right of access to their health information, and
- Providing an accessible framework for the resolution of complaints regarding the handling of health information.

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council is committed to:

- Securing the health, safety and welfare of Council staff and other persons at work,
- Eliminating, at the source, risks to the health, safety or welfare of Council staff and other persons at work, and
- Ensuring that the health and safety of members of the public is not placed at risk by the conduct of undertakings by Council, and
- Providing for the involvement of Council staff in the formulation and implementation of health, safety and welfare standards.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Under the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council is responsible for planning the use, development and protection of land throughout the municipality. Council's activities and performance in this area are measured and reported on annually under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (see pages 87 and 88 of this report).

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

This Act regulates how Victorian public sector agencies, including local councils, collect, manage, and protect personal information.

Knox City Council is committed to ensuring personal information is handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles, and that appropriate measures are in place to safeguard data security. This includes managing privacy risks in service delivery, maintaining secure information systems, and preventing or responding appropriately to privacy breaches if they occur.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Under this Act, Knox City Council plays a key role in protecting and promoting public health at the local level. Council develops and implements a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and undertakes regulatory responsibilities such as inspections and enforcement related to public health risks.

Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, Knox City Council:

- Encourages and facilitates disclosures of both improper conduct by Council staff and detrimental action taken in reprisal for a person making such a disclosure,
- Provides protection for persons who make those disclosures and persons who may suffer detrimental action in reprisal for those disclosures,
- Ensures that those disclosures are properly assessed and, where necessary, investigated, and
- Provides for the confidentiality of the content of those disclosures and the identity of persons who make those disclosures.

Road Management Act 2004

A key part of this Act is the system of classification for roads and the principles about the division of responsibilities between state and local road authorities. Generally speaking, freeways and arterial roads are the responsibility of VicRoads, while service roads and pathways throughout the municipality are the responsibility of Knox City Council (there are exceptions to these general rules). Council's activities and performance in local road management are measured and reported on annually under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (see pages 42 and 43 of this report).

Complaint Resolution

Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure align with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the better practice guide issued by the Victorian Ombudsman, ensuring complaints are managed fairly, transparently and in a timely manner. Council values customer feedback and uses complaints as an important source of insight to continuously improve services and enhance the customer experience. Knox City Council's definition of a complaint includes an expression of dissatisfaction with:

- the quality of an action taken, decision made or service provided by a member of Council staff, contractor or volunteer engaged by the Council
- the delay by a member of Council staff, contractor or volunteer engaged by the Council in taking an action, making a decision or providing a service
- a policy or decision made by a Council or a member of Council staff or a contractor.

In 2025-26, Council received 7,166 complaints. Council is committed to resolving complaints as quickly as possible through a four-tiered complaints process. If we cannot resolve the complaint at first contact, the complaint is escalated through the process to ensure it is reviewed and resolved appropriately.

1. Resolution at First Contact

Council received 5,646 complaints that were resolved at first contact (79%). Council classifies kerbside waste missed bin collections as complaints, as they represent dissatisfaction with Council's service delivery, and they account for the majority of complaints resolved at first contact. While these reports make up a significant proportion of overall complaint volumes, missed bin occurrences remain low relative to the scale of Council's waste collection services. During 2025-26, Knox City Council undertook 5,278,426 bin collections with missed bin collections representing 0.1% of total collections. Reported figures include all missed bin reports received from customers, regardless of cause or subsequent investigation outcomes. These complaints were resolved in an average of 2.3 business days.

2. Complaints Requiring Investigation

Council received 1,413 complaints that required further investigation (20%) and were referred to the appropriate Council officer, who is a subject matter expert. These complaints were resolved in an average of 10.9 business days, which is within Council's complaints resolution timeframe of 20 business days.

Statutory information (continued)

3. Internal Reviews

Council received 103 requests for internal review (1%). For customers who remained dissatisfied with the outcome or handling of their complaint, Council's internal review process provided an opportunity for complaints to be independently reconsidered to ensure concerns were fairly and thoroughly assessed. These complaints were resolved in an average of 12.6 business days, which is within Council's complaints resolution timeframe of 20 business days.

4. External Review

Council recognises the right of all customers to seek an external review if they remain dissatisfied following Council's internal review process. 4 complaints were referred by customers to external authorities (0.05%), including the Victorian Ombudsman, for an external independent review. The very small number of complaints progressing to external review reflects the effectiveness of Council's internal processes in addressing complaints fairly and appropriately at earlier stages. These complaints were resolved in an average of 9.3 days, which is within Council's complaints resolution timeframe of 20 business days. In all instances, the Ombudsman's office accepted Council's actions and responses as sufficient to close the complaints without further action or enquiry.

2025-26 Complaints Summary

Complaint Tier	Complaint Volume	Average Resolution Time
Resolution at First Contact	5,646 (79%)	2.3 days
Complaints Requiring Investigation	1,413 (20%)	10.9 days
Internal Reviews	103 (1%)	12.6 days
External Reviews	4 (0.05%)	9.3 days

Council is not obligated to report complaint data, this is a voluntary disclosure.

Contracts

In accordance with the provisions under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), and the Knox City Council Procurement Policy, the following contracts were awarded following a public tender process for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Contract number	Contract name
3429	Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval Sports field Renewal
3535	Victorian Women's Public Art Program
3444	Provision of Kerbside Recyclables Processing Services
3369	Core Business Systems Program - Seeking Enterprise Resource Planning
3540	Bushland Maintenance Services and Indigenous Tube Stock Provision
3533	Supply, Clearance & Maintenance of Bulk Bins - Operations Centre
3620	Facilities Booking Solution/s
3612	Knox Skate & BMX Park Extension
3617	Carpark Upgrade Works Knox City Tennis Club and Wantirna Reserve
3595	Provision of Roofing and Associated Services for all Council Buildings
3613	Playspace Renewals 25/26, Carrington Park Basketball Key & Outdoor Exercise Area
3602	Lighting Upgrade Design & Construct - Elidon Park (Oval 1), Rowville Rec Res (Oval 1), Bayswater Bowls Club
3632	Wantirna South Early Years Hub Landscape - Construction
3626	Bayswater Senior Citizens' Roof Replacement
3655	Consulting Service for Investigations and Design - Footpath - Mountain Highway The Basin
3659	Macauley Place, Bayswater - Shared Zone Construction
3619	Carrington Park Pavilion Redevelopment (Construction)
3666	Provision of Fire Services Maintenance

Contracts (continued)

Contract number	Contract name
3634	Supply and Deliver a Drainage CCTV Camera System
3724	Managed Security - Operations Centre
3752	Marie Wallace Bayswater Oval Cricket Nets - Drainage Upgrade
3664	Boronia Station Public Art
3674	Sportsfield Maintenance Services
3725	Knox Gardens Reserve Pavilion
3763	Under Excess Claims Management Services
3662	Carrington Park Sportsfield Renewal
3759	Knox Events Operations Manager
3751	Acacia Road and Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Road & Carpark Renewal and Shared Path Construction
3758	Knox Carols Staging and AV Services
3774	Road Renewal of Borg Crescent, Hakea Place and Sasses Avenue
3788	Road Renewal of Lewis Road, Cathies Lane and Shannon Avenue
3688	Walker Reserve, Wantirna South " Sportsfield Lighting Renewal and Eildon Park Reserve (Oval 2), Rowville Sportsfield Lighting Renewal
3773	Demolition of Knox Gymnastics Centre and Talaskia Children and Family Centre
3720	Gilbert Park flyball netting on diamonds 1,2 and 3
3740	Research and Geospatial Analytics Consultancy - Panel

Knox City Council

Performance statement

For the year ended 30 June 2026



Certification of the performance statement

In my opinion, the accompanying performance statement has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Navec Lorkin FCPA
Principal Accounting Officer

14 September 2026

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of Knox City Council for the year ended 30 June 2026 presents fairly the results of council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify this performance statement in its final form.

Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor

14 September 2026

Cr Lisa Cooper
Councillor

14 September 2026

Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

14 September 2026

Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit report

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Councillors of Knox City Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Knox City Council (the council) which comprises the: • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2026 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2026 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2026 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2026 • notes to the accounts • certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of Knox City Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2026 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit report (continued)

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
18 September 2026

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Section 1.
Description of municipality

Located approximately 25 kilometres from Melbourne's central business district, the Knox municipality is a major hub of cultural, commercial, business and innovative activity in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It is a diverse municipality, with residents from over 160 different countries who speak over 139 languages.

The City of Knox has an estimated resident population of 163,820 (as at 30 June 2026) and covers an area of 113.84 square kilometres. The area boasts a green, leafy image extending to the foothills of the picturesque Dandenong Ranges. Knox consists of the following suburbs: Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Knoxfield, Lysterfield, Rowville, Scoresby, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully, Wantirna and Wantirna South.



Section 2.
Service performance indicators

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Aquatic Facilities						
Utilisation **Utilisation of aquatic facilities** [Number of visits to aquatic facilities/ Municipal population]	2.03	2.09	2.22	**N/A**	**2.33**	Knox Leisureworks recorded 382,115 visits in 2025-26. This continues the upward-trend in visitation after 362,973 visits in 2024-25 and 337,582 visits in 2023-24.
Animal Management						
Health and safety **Animal management prosecutions** [Number of successful animal management prosecutions/Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	91.67%	100.00%	100.00%	**N/A**	**100.00%**	Council prosecutes serious offences under the Domestic Animals Act, as well as matters involving repeat offenders who consistently show irresponsible pet ownership. The Council has maintained a 100% success rate in its prosecutions.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Food Safety						
Health and safety **Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications** [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about a food premises followed up/ Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance outcome notifications about a food premises] x 100	**99.40%**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**	**N/A**	**98.02%**	All critical non-compliance notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises were followed up, except for the five premises that closed before the follow up.

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Governance						
Satisfaction **Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement** [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council]	53	69	69	**70**	**72**	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement increased by 3 points from 2025.
Libraries						
Participation **Library membership** [Percentage of the population that are registered library members/Population] x 100	New	28.92%	36.99%	**N/A**	**45.20%**	This increase in library membership is largely due to the continued success of Knox Library Ngarrgoo. Over 10,000 new Members have joined at the branch in 2025-26.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)						
Participation **Participation in the MCH service** [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year)/Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	75.84%	77.21%	75.36%	**N/A**	**73.47%**	Team members are focusing on completing missed visit reports and ensuring those clients that have missed visits are invited to reschedule and attend their appointments.
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year)/Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	85.71%	81.63%	78.08%	**N/A**	**71.24%**	Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children decreased slightly in 2025-26. Proactive engagement has supported First Nations participation in the MCH service. We are constantly exploring engagement strategies to build collaboration and encourage participation.
Roads						
Condition **Sealed local roads below the intervention level** [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council/Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	95.28%	91.18%	90.92%	**91.00%**	**90.83%**	The condition of Council's road network has remained steady, as confirmed by the 2023-24 full road condition audit. These audits are conducted every four years, with the next scheduled for 2026-27. Council maintains high road service standards and is progressively addressing renewal backlogs.

Section 2. Service performance indicators (continued)

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Statutory Planning						
Service standard **Planning applications decided within the relevant required time** [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days)/ Number of planning application decisions made] x 100	71.12%	77.55%	76.73%	**70.00%**	**72.22%**	The percentage of planning applications decided within the legislated timeframe decreased slightly in 2025-26.

Service/indicator/ measure	Results					Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Waste Management						
Waste Diversion **Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill** [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins/ Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100	53.12%	72.87%	71.21%	**72.00%**	**70.79%**	The diversion rate is relatively consistent with the previous reporting period. The diversion rate has been impacted by the successful uptake of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), which has shifted recyclable materials away from Council's collection system, and 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. The diversion rate of 71% continues to place Knox as a leading Council in reducing waste to landfill and in a strong position to achieve state and Council goals on this key environmental indicator.

Note: Measures where no target was required for 2026 are noted as 'N/A'.

Section 3.
Financial performance indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results 2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Efficiency						
Expenditure level **Expenses per property assessment** [Total expenses/Number of property assessments]	$3,034.26	$2,781.51	$2,918.69	**$2,752.00**	**$2,830.50**	
Revenue level **Average rate per property assessment** [Sum of all general rates and municipal charges/Number of property assessments]	$1,623.38	$1,683.69	$1,732.46	**N/A**	**$1,787.33**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	$2,950.33	$2,965.96	$2,922.70	$2,972.45	The 2024-25 expenditure includes a net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment totalling $8.8 million, leading to an increase in the 2024-25 expenses per property assessment. Depreciation increased by $8.0 million in 2025-26 due to the $253 million revaluation increase for property and infrastructure at 30 June 2025. This was partially offset by the $5.3 million decrease in employee costs and materials and services, with this decrease largely due to the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by external providers.
	$1,837.74	$1,880.11	$1,923.53	$1,968.01	General rate income was increased by the approved rate cap percentage.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Liquidity						
Working capital ***Current assets compared to current liabilities*** [Current assets/Current liabilities] x 100	163.35%	167.33%	151.45%	**134.10%**	**166.67%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	132.79%	133.21%	143.20%	125.58%	Cash and cash equivalents, together with other financial assets, are $2.7 million greater than last year, while trade and other receivables are up $2.0 million (including an increase in rates debtors of $1.7 million). Prepayments and contract assets increased by $1.1 million. The increase in trade and other payables of $1.2 million has been offset by the $4.2 million decrease in contract liabilities. Contract liabilities related to unearned grant income which decreased from $5.0 million to $0.8 million due to the completion of large capital projects, leading to the recognition of the grant income. The cash balance at 30 June 2026 is higher than the forecast years largely due to the 80% prepayment of the 2026-27 Financial Assistance Grants. The forecast years also include higher repayment of borrowings, and therefore higher current interest-bearing liabilities. Together these items lead to a reduction in the working capital ratio in the forecast years.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Unrestricted cash **Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities** [Unrestricted cash/Current liabilities] x 100	41.95%	45.73%	76.32%	**N/A**	**90.83%**	
Obligations						
Loans and borrowings **Loans and borrowings compared to rates** [Interest bearing loans and borrowings/Rate revenue] x 100	54.95%	56.42%	55.49%	**N/A**	**51.74%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	71.33%	73.68%	87.92%	72.14%	This measure has seen an increase in 2025-26 as a result of unrestricted cash increasing by $7.1 million, largely due to unspent conditional grant income decreasing by $4.2 million, together with statutory reserves decreasing by $3.5 million. Trust funds and deposits increased by $0.8 million. Current liabilities have decreased by $1.1 million, with the $4.2 million decrease in contract liabilities offset by an increase in trade and other payables ($1.2 million), interest-bearing liabilities ($0.9 million), and trust funds and deposits ($0.8 million). Contract liabilities related to unearned grant income which decreased from $5.0 million to $0.8 million due to the completion of large capital projects, leading to the recognition of the grant income. In the forecast years, the unrestricted cash ratio is forecast to decline because of a reduction in the year-end cash balances, while current liabilities will be higher due to the increased loan repayments. There is an exception in 2028-29 where there is a forecast reduction in the capital works program leading to an increase in the unrestricted cash balance in that year.
	50.15%	48.47%	46.44%	36.62%	Borrowings totalling $6.0 million were taken out in the 2026 financial year, with further borrowings forecast in future years to fund projects within the capital works program. Borrowings totalling $9.6 million were repaid during the 2026 financial year. Rates and charges revenue increased by $4.1 million. The forecast years are decreasing in line with the increased repayment of debt, together with rates revenue being budgeted to increase in line with the forecast CPI.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Loans and borrowings **Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates** [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings/Rate revenue] x 100	4.45%	6.61%	8.35%	**N/A**	**8.45%**	
Indebtedness **Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue** [Non-current liabilities/Own-source revenue] x 100	45.56%	49.91%	47.05%	**N/A**	**43.69%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	8.94%	9.46%	10.38%	10.44%	Borrowings totalling $6.0 million were taken out in the 2026 financial year, with further borrowings forecast in future years to fund projects within the capital works program. Borrowings totalling $9.6 million were repaid during the 2026 financial year, an increase of $0.7 million on the prior year. Rates and charges revenue increased by $4.1 million. We will continue to see an increase in the repayment of debt over the short-term, leading to an increase in this percentage over the four forecast years.
	40.61%	38.86%	36.38%	27.32%	Although borrowings totalling $6.0 million were taken out in the 2026 financial year, repayments of interest-bearing liabilities led to a decrease in non-current liabilities of $3.3 million. Own-source income increased by $5.9 million, including a $4.1 million increase in rates and charges revenue. Although further borrowings are forecast to be required up to 2028-29, loan repayments will be greater than the amounts borrowed leading to a decrease in non-current liabilities year-on-year. Own source revenue is forecast to increase each year, in particular rates and revenue income which is budgeted to increase in line with the forecast CPI. The impact of the forecast decrease in non-current liabilities and forecast increase in own-source revenue is driving the reduction overall in the ratio over the forecast period.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Asset renewal and upgrade						
Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation [Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense/Asset depreciation] x 100	186.26%	165.68%	183.78%	**223.41%**	**140.90%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	162.72%	131.54%	117.33%	122.06%	The 2025-26 actual ratio was lower than the target ratio due to the increase in depreciation of $8.0 million, with this being higher proportionally than the increase in asset renewal and upgrade expenditure, which increase by $0.2 million on the 2025 financial year. The 2026 target figure was higher than the 2025 actuals due to the carry forward from 2024-25 of works for pavilion upgrades that were largely funded by grant income. The increased depreciation was due to the amendments to *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* that led to a $253 million revaluation increase for property and infrastructure at 30 June 2025. The forecast years will continue to be impacted by the higher depreciation levels, impacting the ratio results.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Operating Position						
Adjusted underlying result **Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)** [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/Adjusted underlying revenue] x 100	-9.13%	0.28%	2.39%	**N/A**	**4.69%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	2.45%	5.31%	5.87%	6.10%	The adjusted underlying result year-on-year is impacted by the timing of the Financial Assistance Grants. The Financial Assistance Grants are recognised when received. The 2025-26 result included 50% of the 2025-26 grant and an 80% prepayment of the 2026-27 grant. For the prior years, 2024-25 included 100% of the 2024-25 grant and 50% of the 2025-26 grant, while the 2023-24 grant was prepaid in the 2022-23 financial year. The 2026-27 forecast adjusted underlying result is impacted by the 80% prepayment of the 2026-27 Financial Assistance Grants, while at this stage we are forecasting for the consistent timing of the receipt of funding from 2027-28. In 2025-26, recurrent operating grant income decreased by $5.3 million, largely due to the decrease in kindergarten funding with the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by external providers. This also contributed to the $4.3 million decrease in employee costs. There was a $7.6 million decrease in the net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, with this offset by the $8.0 million increase in depreciation. The increased depreciation was due to the amendments to *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* that led to a $253 million revaluation increase for property and infrastructure at 30 June 2025.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators (continued)

Dimension/indicator/ measure	Results					
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Stability						
Rates concentration **Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue** [Rate revenue/Adjusted underlying revenue] x 100	70.15%	75.47%	71.97%	**72.35%**	**73.81%**	
Rates effort **Rates compared to property values** [Rate revenue/Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x 100	0.22%	0.23%	0.22%	**N/A**	**0.23%**	

	Forecasts				
	2027	2028	2029	2030	Comment
	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	Forecasts	
	74.83%	75.22%	75.03%	75.21%	Recurrent operating grant income decreased by $5.3 million, largely due to the decrease in kindergarten funding with the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by external providers. Rates and charges revenue increased by $4.1 million. Overall this measure remains relatively stable with no expected significant changes impacting the forecast ratio results.
	0.23%	0.22%	0.21%	0.20%	Rates and charges revenue increased by $4.1 million, while the capital improved value of rateable properties has increased by $172 million compared to the 2025 financial year. Overall this measure remains relatively stable with no expected significant changes impacting the forecast ratio results.

Section 4.
Sustainable capacity indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Indicator/ measure	Results				Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
Population **Expenses per head of municipal population** [Total expenses/ Municipal population]	$1,313.42	$1,196.75	$1,254.25	**$1,222.39**	The 2024-25 expenditure includes a net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment totalling $8.8 million, leading to an increase in the 2024-25 expenses per property assessment. Depreciation increased by $8.0 million in 2025-26 due to the $253 million revaluation increase for property and infrastructure at 30 June 2025. This was partially offset by the $5.3 million decrease in employee costs and materials and services, with this decrease largely due to the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by external providers.
Infrastructure per head of municipal population [Value of infrastructure/ Municipal population]	$6,872.31	$7,331.59	$8,893.83	**$9,758.23**	Infrastructure per head of municipal population increased in 2026 compared to 2025 as a result of the infrastructure value increasing by $146.2 million, with additions of $48.4 million and a revaluation increase of $128.0 million being partially offset by a decrease in infrastructure value due to depreciation and disposals. The municipal population increase was proportionately lower, with an actual increase of 518.

Indicator/ measure	Results				Comment
	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
Population density per length of road [Municipal population/ Kilometres of local roads]	219.87	221.84	223.82	**224.53**	The municipal population has increased by 518, with no change in kilometres of local road, leading to the overall slight increase in this measure.
Own-source revenue **Own-source revenue per head of municipal population** [Own-source revenue/ Municipal population]	$975.96	$1,021.63	$1,066.72	**$1,099.40**	Own-source revenue has increased by $5.9 million, including a $4.1 million increase in rates and charges revenue. The municipal population has increased by 518. Relatively, this has caused minor increases year-on-year in the own-source revenue measure overall.
Recurrent grants **Recurrent grants per head of municipal population** [Recurrent grants/ Municipal population]	$162.75	$104.49	$186.54	**$153.94**	Recurrent operating grant income decreased by $5.3 million, largely due to the decrease in kindergarten funding with the majority of kindergarten services from January 2025 being delivered by external providers.
Disadvantage **Relative socio-economic disadvantage** [Index of relative socio-economic disadvantage by decile]	9.00	9.00	9.00	**9.00**	
Workforce turnover **Percentage of staff turnover** [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations/Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x 100	17.7%	15.5%	21.7%	**15.7%**	Council ceased direct delivery of kindergarten services in 2024–25, with external providers now assuming this responsibility. This change involved a business transfer and several redundancies. The staff turnover in the 2026 financial year is comparable to the 2024 financial year figure.

Section 5.
Notes to the accounts

5.1 Basis of preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a Performance Statement within its annual report. The Performance Statement includes the results of the prescribed service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic).

Where applicable, the results in the Performance Statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the financial statements. The other results are based on information drawn from Council information systems or from third parties such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics or Council's community satisfaction survey provider.

The Performance Statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic). Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the Performance Statement includes the target budget for the current year and the results forecast for the period 2026-27 to 2029-30 by the council's financial plan.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic) require explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the Performance Statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

5.2 Definitions

Key term	Definition
Aboriginal children	a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic)
Adjusted underlying revenue	total income other than: non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and non-monetary asset contributions; and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
Annual report	an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic)
Asset renewal expenditure	expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
Asset upgrade expenditure	expenditure that (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
Critical non-compliance outcome notification	a notification received by Council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984* (Vic), or advice given to Council by an authorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
Current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
Current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
Food premises	has the same meaning as in the *Food Act 1984* (Vic)
Intervention level	the level set for the condition of a road beyond which Council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
Local road	a sealed or unsealed road for which Council is the responsible road authority under the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic)
Major non-compliance Outcome notification	a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984* (Vic), or advice given to council by an au-thorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken
Maternal and child health (MCH)	stands for the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by Council to support the health and development of children with-in the municipality from birth until school age

Section 5. Notes to the accounts (continued)

Key term	Definition
Non-current liabilities	all liabilities other than current liabilities
Own-source revenue	adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants)
Population	the resident population estimated by Council
Rate revenue	revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
Relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage in Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australian Bureau of Statistics
Restricted cash	cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	stands for the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its website
Unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

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Certification of the financial statements

Statement by Principal Accounting Officer

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Navec Lorkin FCPA
Principal Accounting Officer

14 September 2026
Wantirna South

Statement by Councillors and Chief Executive Officer

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of Knox City Council for the year ended 30 June 2026 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

As at the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify the financial statements in their final form.

Cr Paige Kennett
Mayor

14 September 2026
Wantirna South

Cr Lisa Cooper
Councillor

14 September 2026
Wantirna South

Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

14 September 2026
Wantirna South

Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit report

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Councillors of Knox City Council

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Knox City Council (the council) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2026 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • certification of the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2026 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

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Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit report (continued)

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. • obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control • evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors • conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern. • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation. I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
18 September 2026

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive income statement

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Income/revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	155,084	151,015
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	5,026	4,796
User fees	3.3	15,034	13,587
Grants - operating	3.4	22,357	27,325
Grants - capital	3.4	10,598	7,040
Contributions - monetary	3.5	9,195	6,600
Contributions - non-monetary	3.5	8,736	1,899
Share of net profits of associates and joint ventures	6.2	92	239
Other income	3.7	4,868	4,560
Total income/revenue		**230,990**	**217,061**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	(76,397)	(80,664)
Materials and services	4.2	(75,358)	(76,414)
Depreciation	4.3	(33,619)	(25,659)
Amortisation - intangible assets		(915)	(878)
Depreciation - right-of-use assets	4.4	(1,104)	(1,205)
Allowance for impairment losses	4.5	(591)	(508)
Borrowing costs		(3,567)	(3,767)
Finance costs - leases		(332)	(288)
Contributions and donations	4.6	(6,218)	(5,973)
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	(1,241)	(8,820)
Other expenses	4.7	(910)	(646)
Total expenses		**(200,252)**	**(204,822)**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**30,738**	**12,239**
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	9.1	91,612	252,994
Total other comprehensive income		**91,612**	**252,994**
Total comprehensive result		**122,350**	**265,233**

The above Comprehensive Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance sheet

As at 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	54,491	54,323
Other financial assets	5.1	5,000	2,500
Trade and other receivables	5.1	26,324	24,292
Inventories		23	12
Prepayments	5.2	1,888	1,167
Non-current assets classified as held for sale		1,440	582
Contract assets	5.1	1,427	1,090
Total current assets		**90,593**	**83,966**
Non-current assets			
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	2,677,633	2,567,045
Right-of-use assets	5.8	6,488	5,305
Intangible assets	5.2	1,381	1,879
Investment in Your Library Limited	6.2	3,078	2,986
Total non-current assets		**2,688,580**	**2,577,215**
Total assets		**2,779,173**	**2,661,181**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	21,027	19,874
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	3,797	2,949
Contract and other liabilities	5.3	815	5,039
Provisions	5.5	17,581	17,336
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	10,325	9,445
Lease liabilities	5.8	810	799
Total current liabilities		**54,355**	**55,442**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.5	2,830	2,962
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	69,917	74,360
Lease liabilities	5.8	5,944	4,640
Total non-current liabilities		**78,691**	**81,962**
Total liabilities		**133,046**	**137,404**
Net assets		**2,646,127**	**2,523,777**

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		769,604	736,556
Reserves	9.1	1,876,523	1,787,221
Total equity		**2,646,127**	**2,523,777**

The above Balance Sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2026

2026	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		2,523,777	736,556	1,769,295	17,926
Surplus for the year		30,738	30,738	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/ (loss)	6.1	91,612	-	91,612	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(15,200)	-	15,200
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	17,510	-	(17,510)
Balance at end of the financial year		**2,646,127**	**769,604**	**1,860,907**	**15,616**

2025	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		2,258,544	723,126	1,516,301	19,117
Surplus for the year		12,239	12,239	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/ (loss)	6.1	252,994	-	252,994	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(11,485)	-	11,485
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	12,676	-	(12,676)
Balance at end of the financial year		**2,523,777**	**736,556**	**1,769,295**	**17,926**

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		153,579	148,279
Statutory fees and fines		4,188	4,064
User fees		15,384	13,957
Grants - operating		21,993	27,822
Grants - capital		6,820	11,029
Contributions - monetary		9,669	6,735
Interest received		2,018	2,651
Trust funds and deposits taken		34,259	23,046
Other receipts		2,874	2,132
Net GST refund		11,383	11,329
Employee costs		(76,257)	(82,016)
Materials and services		(86,354)	(85,498)
Contributions and donations		(6,819)	(6,551)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments		(107)	(13)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(33,411)	(22,657)
Other payments		(855)	(640)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9.2	**58,364**	**53,669**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	(48,199)	(44,651)
Proceeds from sales of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		886	5,170
Payments for investments		(5,000)	(2,500)
Proceeds from sale of investments		2,500	10,000
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		**(49,813)**	**(31,981)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(3,548)	(3,738)
Proceeds from borrowings		6,000	10,000
Repayment of borrowings		(9,563)	(8,865)
Interest paid - lease liability		(325)	(290)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(947)	(1,088)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		**(8,383)**	**(3,981)**

Statement of cash flows (continued)

	Note	2026 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		168	17,707
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		54,323	36,616
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5.1	**54,491**	**54,323**
Financing arrangements	5.6		

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of capital works

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Property			
Buildings		15,208	10,613
Total buildings		**15,208**	**10,613**
Total property		**15,208**	**10,613**
Plant and equipment			
Artworks		25	57
Plant, machinery and equipment		2,303	2,466
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		36	36
Computers and telecommunications		386	672
Total plant and equipment		**2,750**	**3,231**
Infrastructure			
Roads		10,485	7,854
Bridges		963	833
Footpaths and cycleways		4,862	5,127
Drainage		4,203	6,454
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		8,853	12,714
Off street car parks		1,324	2,967
Total infrastructure		**30,690**	**35,949**
Total capital works expenditure		**48,648**	**49,793**
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		1,183	2,378
Asset renewal expenditure		30,645	35,102
Asset expansion expenditure		95	258
Asset upgrade expenditure		16,725	12,055
Total capital works expenditure		**48,648**	**49,793**

The above Statement of Capital Works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report

For the Year Ended 30 June 2026

Note 1 Overview

Introduction

Knox City Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council in 1994 and is a body corporate. The Council's main office is located at 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, Victoria.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The Council is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Accounting policy information

(a) Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Specific accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 3.4)
- the determination, in accordance with *AASB 16 Leases*, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- whether or not *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* is applicable
- other areas requiring judgements

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

(b) Impacts of other external events

Council has considered ongoing external events that have contributed to volatility in international markets, disrupted global supply chains and increased inflationary pressure, including the risk that they may cause significant changes in the carrying values of assets and liabilities in the next financial year, and has concluded that there is no material impact on the 2025-26 financial report that requires additional disclosure.

Note 2 Analysis of our results

2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of greater than ten percent and $1,000,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

The budget figures detailed below are those adopted by Council on 23 June 2025. The budget was based on assumptions that were relevant at the time of adoption of the budget. Council sets guidelines and parameters for income and expense targets in this budget in order to meet Council's planning and financial performance targets for both the short and long-term. The budget did not reflect any changes to equity resulting from asset revaluations, as their impacts were not considered predictable.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

2.1.1 Income/revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2026 $'000	Actual 2026 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Income/revenue					
Rates and charges	153,826	155,084	**1,258**	**1%**	
Statutory fees and fines	5,458	5,026	**(432)**	**-8%**	
User fees	13,677	15,034	**1,357**	**10%**	**1**
Grants - operating	19,651	22,357	**2,706**	**14%**	**2**
Grants - capital	10,383	10,598	**215**	**2%**	
Contributions - monetary	5,000	9,195	**4,195**	**84%**	**3**
Contributions - non-monetary	2,000	8,736	**6,736**	**337%**	**4**
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	10,506	(1,241)	**(11,747)**	**-112%**	**5**
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	4	92	**88**	**2200%**	
Other income	1,803	4,868	**3,065**	**170%**	**6**
Total income/revenue	**222,308**	**229,749**	**7,441**	**3%**	
Expenses					
Employee costs	77,377	76,397	**980**	**1%**	
Materials and services	77,100	75,358	**1,742**	**2%**	
Depreciation	25,329	33,619	**(8,290)**	**-33%**	**7**
Amortisation - intangible assets	903	915	**(12)**	**-1%**	
Depreciation - right of use assets	1,176	1,104	**72**	**6%**	
Allowance for impairment losses	317	591	**(274)**	**-86%**	
Borrowing costs	3,599	3,567	**32**	**1%**	
Finance costs - leases	419	332	**87**	**21%**	
Contributions and donations	6,138	6,218	**(80)**	**-1%**	
Other expenses	796	910	**(114)**	**-14%**	
Total expenses	**193,154**	**199,011**	**(5,857)**	**-3%**	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**29,154**	**30,738**	**1,584**	**5%**	

Note 2 Analysis of our results (continued)

2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	User fees	Unbudgeted income totalling $0.514 million was received from the container deposit scheme. Fees related to the Active and Creative Communities department were $0.413 million greater than budget. This was partially offset by fees related to Building Services being $0.321 million lower than budget.
2	Grants - operating	50% of the 2025-26 General Purpose Grant was received during the 2026 financial year, while 80% of the 2026-27 General Purpose Grant was brought forward and paid prior to 30 June 2026. Therefore the total General Purpose Grant received during the 2025-26 financial year was $2.710 million greater than budget. Grants received for Early Years services were $0.818 million lower than budget. This was offset by the receipt of $0.519 million in unbudgeted operating grants, and the decrease of $0.339 million in unearned operating grants throughout the organisation.
3	Contributions - monetary	Unbudgeted contributions totalling $4.733 million were received related to a land transaction, including $2.780 million which was transferred to the social housing reserve. This was partially offset by public open space contributions being $0.615 million lower than budget.
4	Contributions - non-monetary	Non-monetary contributions were $6.736 million greater than budget due to assets handed over to Council from developers, with the timing of these contributions varying year-to year depending on the level of development.
5	Net loss (gain) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	A timing difference in land sales totalling $10.025 million budgeted to proceed in the 2025-26 financial year, are instead set to proceed during the 2026-27 financial year. Sale of plant was $0.352 million down on budget. Unbudgeted building disposals during the year totalled $0.308 million, while unbudgeted infrastructure disposals during the year totalled $1.175 million.
6	Other income	Interest on investments was $1.274 million greater than budget due to higher than budgeted interest rates and cash holdings related to the timing of delivery of the capital works program. Reimbursements were $0.784 million greater than budget, while unbudgeted rebates totalling $0.771 million were received.
7	Depreciation	Depreciation is $8.290 million greater than budget due to the impact of *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* which contributed to an increase of $252.994 million in the value of Council assets as at 30 June 2025, after the adoption of the budget for the 2025-26 financial year.

2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2026 $'000	Actual 2026 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Buildings	16,322	15,208	**(1,114)**	**-7%**	
Total buildings	**16,322**	**15,208**	**(1,114)**	**-7%**	
Total property	**16,322**	**15,208**	**(1,114)**	**-7%**	
Plant and equipment					
Artworks	210	25	**(185)**	**-88%**	
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,949	2,303	**354**	**18%**	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	36	**36**		
Computers and telecommunications	5,341	386	**(4,955)**	**-93%**	**1**
Total plant and equipment	**7,500**	**2,750**	**(4,750)**	**-63%**	
Infrastructure					
Roads	9,307	10,485	**1,178**	**13%**	**2**
Bridges	973	963	**(10)**	**-1%**	
Footpaths and cycleways	5,735	4,862	**(873)**	**-15%**	
Drainage	4,868	4,203	**(665)**	**-14%**	
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	10,721	8,853	**(1,868)**	**-17%**	**3**
Off street car parks	1,616	1,324	**(292)**	**-18%**	
Other infrastructure	803	-	**(803)**	**-100%**	
Total infrastructure	**34,023**	**30,690**	**(3,333)**	**-10%**	
Total capital works expenditure	**57,845**	**48,648**	**(9,197)**	**-16%**	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	1,227	1,183	**(44)**	**-4%**	
Asset renewal expenditure	39,318	30,645	**(8,673)**	**-22%**	
Asset expansion expenditure	30	95	**65**	**217%**	
Asset upgrade expenditure	17,270	16,725	**(545)**	**-3%**	
Total capital works expenditure	**57,845**	**48,648**	**(9,197)**	**-16%**	

Note 2 Analysis of our results (continued)

2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Computers and telecommunications	Capital expenditure is lower than budget partially due to $3.422 million in expenditure being deemed to be operational in nature and therefore was not capitalised. A number of projects were identified in March 2026 as requiring carry forward into 2026-27 due to changes in project delivery timeframes.
2	Roads	Capital expenditure totalling $0.179 million was carried forward from the 2024-25 financial year. $0.308 million in capital expenditure budgeted in different asset classes has been capitalised under roads. The overspend against budget of $0.516 million in two road projects utilised savings from projects from different asset classes.
3	Recreational, leisure and community facilities	Capital expenditure was below budget primarily due to landscaping and planting works being recognised as operating expenditure rather than capital expenditure ($0.926 million), together with project reclassifications between capital asset categories ($0.265 million). These variances were partially offset by the recognition of projects within the recreational, leisure and community facilities category from other asset categories ($0.451 million). The budgeted carry forward for the Playground Renewal Program of $1.096 million was not needed to complete project delivery.

2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

Knox City Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

2.2.1 CEO

The office of the CEO incorporates the Chief Executive Office and the Chief Financial Office.

The Chief Executive Office responsibilities include establishing and maintaining an appropriate organisational structure for the council, managing interactions between council staff and councillors, ensuring that Council decisions are implemented promptly, providing timely advice to Council, providing timely and reliable advice to the Council about its legal obligations, and overseeing the daily management of council operations following the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Chief Financial Office provides financial direction and support across Council. It partners with staff on budgets, purchasing, tenders and contracts. It also provides support for the day-to-day operations of council-owned property and buildings, and manages property rates and valuation services.

City Liveability

The City Liveability Directorate incorporates City Futures, City Planning and Building, City Projects, and City Safety and Health. The Directorate deliver important services for the health, safety and future development of Knox.

The City Futures department uses research and mapping to understand growth and change in Knox, and to inform planning. It works with community members, business owners and internal departments to respond to changing needs.

The City Planning and Building department works with the community to assess land use and development in Knox.

2.2 Analysis of Council results by program (continued)

The City Projects department helps shape key projects for Knox's growth into the future. It makes informed decisions based on regular customer feedback and input.

The City Safety and Health department helps protect the safety and health of the Knox community. It does this through dedicated programs, education and local laws.

Connected Communities

The Connected Communities Directorate incorporates Active and Creative Communities, Community Access and Support, Community Strengthening, and Early Years. The Directorate deliver services to support health, wellbeing and culture for an inclusive and safe community.

The Active and Creative Communities department contributes to health and culture in the Knox community through leisure, events, arts and sports.

The Community Access and Support department makes a difference in the social and emotional wellbeing of people in the Knox community.

The Community Strengthening department develops strategies and delivers programs and education to support vulnerable community. It works to create a more inclusive, connected and safe community.

The Early Years department delivers key health and education programs for the youngest members of the Knox community and their families.

Customer and Performance

The Customer and Performance Directorate incorporates the Chief Information Office, Customer and Communications, Governance and Risk, People, Culture and Development, and Strategy and Transformation. The directorate works with all Council staff to improve the lives of internal and external stakeholders and the broader Knox community.

The Chief Information Office delivers organisation-wide technical solutions that enable customers to interact with Council services.

The Customer and Communications department bridges the gap between internal and external operations. It communicates Council's services, facilities and programs to meet and support the evolving needs of the community, helping internal and external stakeholders to thrive through customer trust and confidence.

The Governance and Risk department provides advice and support on compliance, governance, policy and risk. The People, Culture and Development department works with staff to create a safe, fair and enjoyable workplace where everyone thrives.

The Strategy and Transformation department uses data and analytics to plan, manage change and move our organisation forward. It helps Council create and achieve our vision for the future, ensuring our services meet customer needs and remain relevant over time.

Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Directorate incorporates Engineering Services and Operations, Green Spaces and Environment, Major Projects and Facilities, and Strategic Infrastructure. The directorate manages and maintains Council infrastructure such as roads, footpaths, buildings, playgrounds, open space and other assets that our customers use.

The Engineering Services and Operations department maintains and ensures safety of assets that our customers and staff use. This includes fleet cars, footpaths and drains. It also provides expert advice in engineering.

The Green Spaces and Environment department manages waste collection, open spaces, sportsfields, reserves, parks, gardens and trees. It also delivers biodiversity programs and waste education.

The Major Projects and Facilities department delivers major projects that supplement the capital projects Council delivers. It is also responsible for maintaining and upgrading Council-owned buildings.

The Strategic Infrastructure department delivers buildings and open spaces for customers to enjoy. It manages stormwater and provides expert advice on building construction, design and public transport.

Note 2 Analysis of our results (continued)

2.2 Analysis of Council results by program (continued)

2.2.2 Summary of income/revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

2026	Income/ revenue $'000	Expenses $'000	Surplus/ (Deficit) $'000	Grants included in income/ revenue $'000	Total assets $'000
CEO	141,718	10,031	131,687	10,510	84,269
City Liveability	14,729	20,503	(5,774)	1,012	53,226
Connected Communities	23,210	47,412	(24,202)	16,468	690,294
Customer and Performance	761	28,820	(28,059)	252	67,628
Infrastructure	50,572	93,486	(42,914)	4,713	1,883,756
	230,990	**200,252**	**30,738**	**32,955**	**2,779,173**

2025	Income/ revenue $'000	Expenses $'000	Surplus/ (Deficit) $'000	Grants included in income/ revenue $'000	Total assets $'000
CEO	138,001	9,953	128,048	11,605	79,591
City Liveability	14,313	19,681	(5,368)	974	51,946
Connected Communities	22,867	51,497	(28,630)	16,406	662,046
Customer and Performance	259	28,749	(28,490)	-	59,749
Infrastructure	41,621	94,942	(53,321)	5,380	1,807,849
	217,061	**204,822**	**12,239**	**34,365**	**2,661,181**

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services

3.1 Rates and charges

Council uses Capital Improved Value (CIV) as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The CIV takes into account the total value of a property including all land, buildings and other improvements but excluding fixtures and fittings.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2025-26 was $66,857 million (2024-25: $66,753 million). The 2025-26 rate in the CIV dollar was $0.0015140 (2024-25: $0.0014650) for the residential rate.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
General rates	125,484	120,868
Residential garbage charge	25,386	26,090
Service rates and charges	1,858	2,008
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	966	709
Cultural and recreational	58	54
Interest on rates and charges	1,332	1,286
Total rates and charges	**155,084**	**151,015**

The date of the latest general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2025 and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2025.

Annual rates and charges are recognised as income when Council issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Permits	1,809	1,629
Infringements and costs	1,469	1,183
Court recoveries	1,386	1,031
Town planning fees	207	809
Land information certificates	153	143
Other statutory fees and fines	2	1
Total statutory fees and fines	**5,026**	**4,796**

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as income when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

3.3 User fees

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Waste management services	3,580	3,417
Registration and other permits	2,856	2,641
Leisure centre and recreation	2,696	2,532
Child care/children's programs	2,687	2,239
Infrastructure services	1,022	793
Aged and health services	590	512
Building services	555	586
Other fees and charges	1,048	867
Total user fees	**15,034**	**13,587**

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms. All of Knox City Council's user fees are recognised at a point in time.

3.4 Funding from other levels of government

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	23,823	22,102
State funded grants	9,132	12,263
Total grants received	**32,955**	**34,365**

(a) Operating grants

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants	10,510	11,605
Family and children - child care	4,595	4,293
General home care	1,262	1,213
Recurrent - State Government		
Family and children - maternal and child health	1,722	1,732
Family and children - kindergarten	1,150	6,287
Family and children - child care	1,066	760
School crossing supervisors	831	815
Family and children - youth services	314	263
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	258	23
Community health	200	174
Other	52	50
Community safety	-	20
Total recurrent operating grants	**21,960**	**27,235**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Community health	10	-
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Environmental planning	68	-
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	40	54
Community health	5	20
Other	274	15
Family and children - kindergarten	-	1
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**397**	**90**
Total operating grants	**22,357**	**27,325**

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

3.4 Funding from other levels of government (continued)

(b) Capital grants

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants - local roads	2,085	2,274
Roads to recovery	1,173	953
Total recurrent capital grants	**3,258**	**3,227**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	3,965	1,764
Footpaths and cycleways	116	-
Drainage	94	-
Roads	13	-
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	3,117	1,317
Drainage	22	417
Footpaths and cycleways	13	315
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**7,340**	**3,813**
Total capital grants	**10,598**	**7,040**

(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue the Council assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. When both these conditions are satisfied, the Council:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- determines the transaction price
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the point in time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Council applies *AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities*.

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed.

The following table provides a summary of unspent grants.

3.4 Funding from other levels of government (continued)

(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Operating		
Balance at start of year	788	674
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	379	656
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(718)	(542)
Balance at year end	**449**	**788**
Capital		
Balance at start of year	4,251	1,374
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	364	4,229
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(4,249)	(1,352)
Balance at year end	**366**	**4,251**

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

3.5 Contributions

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Monetary	9,195	6,600
Non-monetary	8,736	1,899
Total contributions	**17,931**	**8,499**

Contributions of non-monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Roads	3,796	78
Drainage	2,597	237
Land	1,635	1,555
Footpaths and cycleways	664	21
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	24	-
Bridges	20	-
Off street car parks	-	8
Total non-monetary contributions	**8,736**	**1,899**

Monetary and non-monetary contributions are recognised as income at their fair value when Council obtains control over the contributed asset.

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Proceeds of sale	886	5,102
Written down value of assets disposed	(2,127)	(13,922)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	**(1,241)**	**(8,820)**

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Interest	2,225	2,533
Reimbursements	911	1,064
Rent	757	748
Rebates	771	1
Other	204	214
Total other income	**4,868**	**4,560**

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when Council gains control over the right to receive the income.

Note 4 The cost of delivering services

4.1 (a) Employee costs

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Wages and salaries	55,959	59,558
Annual leave and long service leave	7,200	7,518
Superannuation	8,014	7,831
Agency staff	2,493	2,920
WorkCover	2,419	2,509
Fringe benefits tax	312	328
Total employee costs	**76,397**	**80,664**

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	164	235
	164	**235**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	-	-
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	3,267	3,340
Employer contributions - other funds	3,943	3,650
	7,210	**6,990**
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	610	559

Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to Note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

Note 4 The cost of delivering services (continued)

4.2 Materials and services

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contract payments		
Waste Management	26,890	26,405
Operations - Maintenance	10,050	9,075
Operating Projects Expenditure	4,295	8,389
Corporate Services	2,031	1,301
Active Ageing & Disability	1,270	1,307
Arts & Cultural Services	759	589
Community Laws	479	483
People & Culture	360	372
Planning & Development	337	478
Other	1,436	1,386
Total Contract Payments	**47,907**	**49,785**
Administration costs	7,138	7,004
Utilities	3,961	4,332
Consumable materials and equipment	3,497	3,422
Information technology	3,789	3,362
Building maintenance	2,531	2,591
Insurance	2,505	2,476
Consultants	1,609	1,708
General maintenance	1,497	900
Finance and legal costs	924	834
Total materials and services	**75,358**	**76,414**

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

4.3 Depreciation

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Infrastructure	25,413	18,441
Property	6,696	5,746
Plant and equipment	1,510	1,472
Total depreciation	**33,619**	**25,659**

Refer to note 5.2(b), 5.8 and 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

4.4 Depreciation - right of use assets

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Property	579	617
Computers and telecommunications	491	555
Plant and equipment	34	33
Total depreciation - right of use assets	**1,104**	**1,205**

4.5 Allowance for impairment losses

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Parking and animal infringement debtors	562	485
Other debtors	29	23
Total Allowance for impairment losses	**591**	**508**
Movement in allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors		
Balance at the beginning of the year	21	15
New allowances recognised during the year	29	22
Amounts already allowed for and written off as uncollectible	(21)	(16)
Amounts allowed for but recovered during the year	-	-
Balance at the end of the year	**29**	**21**

An allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historic and forward looking information in determining the level of impairment.

4.6 Contributions and donations

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contribution to Your Library Limited	4,747	4,510
Community support payments	1,471	1,463
Total contributions and donations	**6,218**	**5,973**

4.7 Other expenses

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Councillors allowances	506	470
Auditor's remuneration - internal audit	210	69
Auditor's remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	97	96
Operating lease rentals	97	11
Total other expenses	**910**	**646**

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations

5.1 Financial assets

(a) Cash and cash equivalents

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash on hand	4	4
Cash at bank	24,487	34,319
Term deposits	30,000	20,000
Total cash and cash equivalents	**54,491**	**54,323**

(b) Other financial assets

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Term deposits	5,000	2,500
Total current other financial assets	**5,000**	**2,500**
Total other financial assets	**5,000**	**2,500**
Total cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets	**59,491**	**56,823**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of 90 days or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Term deposits are held to maturity and measured at original cost.

Other financial assets include term deposits. Those with original maturity dates of three to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

(c) Trade and other receivables

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	21,535	19,848
Special rate assessment	52	52
Parking and animal infringement debtors	4,883	4,010
Allowance for expected credit loss - infringements	(3,522)	(2,960)
Net GST receivable	1,921	1,858
Non statutory receivables		
Other debtors	1,484	1,505
Allowance for expected credit loss - other debtors	(29)	(21)
Total trade and other receivables	**26,324**	**24,292**

5.1 Financial assets (continued)

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. An allowance for expected credit losses is recognised based on past experience and other objective evidence of expected losses. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.)

(d) Ageing of receivables

The ageing of the Council's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current (not yet due)	681	566
Past due by up to 30 days	197	278
Past due between 31 and 180 days	181	179
Past due between 181 and 365 days	13	170
Past due by more than 1 year	412	312
Total trade and other receivables	**1,484**	**1,505**

(e) Ageing of individually impaired receivables

At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of $nil (2025: $nil) were impaired. The amount of the allowance raised against these debtors was $nil (2025: $nil). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection. Many of the long outstanding past due amounts have been lodged with the Council's debt collectors or are on payment arrangements.

(f) Contract assets

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Accrued income	1,427	1,090
Total contract assets	**1,427**	**1,090**

Contract assets are recognised when Council has transferred goods or services to the customer but where Council is yet to establish an unconditional right to consideration.

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.2 Non-financial assets

(a) Other assets

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Prepayments	1,888	1,167
Total other assets	**1,888**	**1,167**

(b) Intangible assets

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Software	1,381	1,879
Total intangible assets	**1,381**	**1,879**
Gross carrying amount		
Balance at 1 July 2025	8,395	8,357
Additions	417	404
Disposals	(513)	(366)
Balance at 30 June 2026	**8,299**	**8,395**
Accumulated amortisation and impairment		
Balance at 1 July 2025	6,516	5,938
Amortisation expense	915	878
Amortisation expense for disposals	(513)	(300)
Balance at 30 June 2026	**6,918**	**6,516**
Net book value at 30 June 2025	**1,879**	**2,419**
Net book value at 30 June 2026	**1,381**	**1,879**

Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis over the asset's useful life. Amortisation is generally calculated on a straight line basis, at a rate that allocates the asset value, less any estimated residual value over its estimated useful life. Estimates of the remaining useful lives and amortisation method are reviewed at least annually, and adjustments made where appropriate.

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract liabilities

(a) Trade and other payables

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Non-statutory payables		
Trade payables	13,143	13,068
Accrued expenses	5,709	4,846
Prepaid income	2,175	1,960
Total current trade and other payables	**21,027**	**19,874**

Prepaid income includes $2.098 million for rates income that has been paid in advance.

(b) Trust funds and deposits

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Refundable deposits	2,097	1,831
Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund	1,572	971
Retention amounts	93	105
Other refundable deposits	35	42
Total current trust funds and deposits	**3,797**	**2,949**

(c) Contract liabilities

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance - operating	449	788
Grants received in advance - capital	366	4,251
Total contract liabilities	**815**	**5,039**

Trust funds and deposits

Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in Council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Contract liabilities

Contract liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of operating and capital grants. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract liabilities (continued)

Purpose and nature of items

Refundable deposits - Deposits are taken by Council as a form of surety in a number of circumstances, including in relation to building works, tender deposits, contract deposits and the use of civic facilities.

Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund - Council is the collection agent for the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a four-instalment basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the State Government in line with that process.

Retention amounts - Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings - secured	7,833	7,022
Other borrowings - secured	2,492	2,423
Total current interest-bearing liabilities	**10,325**	**9,445**
Non-current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings - secured	57,802	59,752
Other borrowings - secured	12,115	14,608
Total non-current interest-bearing liabilities	**69,917**	**74,360**
Total	**80,242**	**83,805**

Borrowings are secured by the general rates revenue of Council.

(a) The maturity profile for Council's borrowings is:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Not later than one year	10,325	9,445
Later than one year and not later than five years	45,968	41,996
Later than five years	23,949	32,364
Total	**80,242**	**83,805**

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.

5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities (continued)

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities based on contractual repayment terms at every balance date.

In classifying borrowings as current or non-current Council considers whether at balance date it has the right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting period. Council's loan arrangements include covenants based on Council's financial performance and position at the end of the reporting period. These covenants are assessed for compliance after the reporting period based on specified financial ratios.

5.5 Provisions

	Employee $'000	Landfill rehabilitation $'000	Total $'000
2026			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	18,017	2,281	20,298
Additional provisions	6,596	270	6,866
Amounts used	(6,399)	(236)	(6,635)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(41)	(77)	(118)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**18,173**	**2,238**	**20,411**
Provisions - current	17,051	530	17,581
Provisions - non-current	1,122	1,708	2,830
2025			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	19,174	2,216	21,390
Additional provisions	6,559	355	6,914
Amounts used	(7,996)	(340)	(8,336)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	280	50	330
Balance at the end of the financial year	**18,017**	**2,281**	**20,298**
Provisions - current	16,971	365	17,336
Provisions - non-current	1,046	1,916	2,962

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.5 Provisions (continued)

(a) Employee provisions

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	3,047	2,921
Long service leave	1,248	1,099
Gratuities	53	58
	4,348	**4,078**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	3,555	3,665
Long service leave	8,920	8,858
Gratuities	228	370
	12,703	**12,893**
Total current employee provisions	**17,051**	**16,971**
Non-current		
Long service leave	1,122	1,046
Total non-current employee provisions	**1,122**	**1,046**
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	17,051	16,971
Non-current	1,122	1,046
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**18,173**	**18,017**

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if the Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

5.5 Provisions (continued)

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Gratuity retirement allowance

A gratuity retirement allowance exists for employees who commenced prior to 3 May 1996, with new employees who commenced after that date not being eligible, and is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability. Liabilities expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at their nominal values. Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

	2026	2025
Key Assumptions - AL:		
Weighted average discount rate	2.44%	1.82%
Weighted average index rate	3.45%	2.50%
Average settlement period (years)	2	2
Key Assumptions - LSL:		
Weighted average discount rate - current	4.20%	3.43%
Weighted average discount rate - non-current	4.39%	3.33%
Weighted average index rate - current	3.10%	2.50%
Weighted average index rate - non-current	3.00%	2.50%
Average settlement period (years)	18	16
Key Assumptions - Gratuity:		
Weighted average discount rate	3.62%	2.83%
Weighted average index rate	3.18%	2.50%
Average settlement period (years)	30	29

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.5 Provisions (continued)

(b) Landfill rehabilitation provisions

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Cathies Lane landfill site	321	225
Llewellyn Reserve landfill site	209	140
Total current landfill rehabilitation provisions	**530**	**365**
Non-current		
Cathies Lane landfill site	1,166	1,344
Llewellyn Reserve landfill site	542	572
Total non-current landfill rehabilitation provisions	**1,708**	**1,916**
Total aggregate carrying amount of landfill rehabilitation provisions	**2,238**	**2,281**

Council owns two former landfill sites - Cathies Lane and Llewellyn Reserve. Under the terms of Post Closure Pollution Abatement Notices issued by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Council is required to monitor, progressively rehabilitate and conduct rectification works. The provision for landfill rehabilitation has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken including site aftercare and monitoring costs. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on the current understanding of the work required to progressively rehabilitate the sites to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs.

Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

	2026	2025
Key assumptions - Cathies Lane landfill site:		
Weighted average discount rate	5.46%	4.55%
Inflation rate	2.53%	2.56%
Settlement period (years)	8	9
Estimated cost to rehabilitate	**$1.673m**	**$1.736m**
Key assumptions - Llewellyn Reserve landfill site:		
Weighted average discount rate	5.47%	4.54%
Inflation rate	2.53%	2.56%
Settlement period (years)	8	9
Estimated cost to rehabilitate	**$0.839m**	**$0.722m**

5.5 Provisions (continued)

Cathies Lane landfill site

Council operated the Cathies Lane landfill site, Wantirna South from 1986 to 2004, under a licence issued by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). The site is closed as a landfill but a portion of the site is still being used as a resource recovery centre (transfer station) to receive, process and transport waste to other sites for refuse and/or disposal. In 2015-16 the EPA issued a Post Closure Pollution Abatement notice and Council has surrendered the landfill licence.

In the financial report for June 2026, Council has an amount of $1.486 million as a provision for the restoration of the Cathies Lane landfill site and includes an ongoing commitment of approximately $0.192 million per annum for site aftercare to meet EPA obligations where restoration works have been completed. This is based on the assessment undertaken in 2015 and a reassessment of the provision at balance date in which the provision was measured at the net present value of the future rehabilitation costs including aftercare and site monitoring costs. Included in the aftercare is the cost to provide a bank guarantee to meet the Financial Assurance requirements imposed by the EPA on Council for thirty years post closure of this site.

Llewellyn Reserve landfill site

Council's landfill site at Llewellyn Reserve was closed in 1985. In 2015-16 the EPA issued a Post Closure Pollution Abatement notice.

In the financial report for June 2026, Council has an amount of $0.751 million as a provision for the restoration of the Llewellyn Reserve landfill site and includes an ongoing commitment of approximately $0.089 million per annum to cover sampling, testing and reporting requirements as required by the EPA. This is based on an assessment undertaken in 2015 and a reassessment of the provision at balance date in which the provision was measured at the net present value of the future rehabilitation costs including aftercare and site monitoring costs.

5.6 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2026.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Bank overdraft	1,500	1,500
Credit card facilities	200	200
Treasury Corporation of Victoria facilities	65,635	66,774
Other facilities	14,607	17,031
Total facilities	**81,942**	**85,505**
Used facilities	80,274	83,840
Unused facilities	**1,668**	**1,665**

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.7 Commitments

The Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

(a) Commitments for expenditure

2026	Not later than 1 year $'000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years $'000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years $'000	Later than 5 years $'000	Total $'000
Operating					
Garbage collection and recycling	256	-	-	-	256
Library services	4,809	4,930	10,232	-	19,971
Infrastructure management	6,990	3,669	5,028	-	15,687
Consultancies	901	231	388	-	1,520
Total	**12,956**	**8,830**	**15,648**	**-**	**37,434**
Capital					
Buildings	3,359	-	-	-	3,359
Plant and equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Other infrastructure	682	-	-	-	682
Total	**4,041**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**4,041**

2025	Not later than 1 year $'000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years $'000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years $'000	Later than 5 years $'000	Total $'000
Operating					
Garbage collection and recycling	1,219	-	-	-	1,219
Library services	4,564	4,678	9,708	-	18,950
Infrastructure management	5,715	2,502	1,260	-	9,477
Consultancies	1,165	438	154	-	1,757
Total	**12,663**	**7,618**	**11,122**	**-**	**31,403**
Capital					
Buildings	7,384	54	-	-	7,438
Plant and equipment	959	-	-	-	959
Other infrastructure	2,105	-	-	-	2,105
Total	**10,448**	**54**	**-**	**-**	**10,502**

5.7 Commitments (continued)

(b) Operating lease receivables

Council has a number of leases with external entities where they pay for the use of Council land and buildings. These properties held under operating leases have remaining non-cancellable lease terms of between 1 and 30 years. A number of these leases include a CPI based revision of the rental charge annually.

Future undiscounted minimum rentals receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Not later than one year	588	632
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,690	1,627
Later than five years	6,315	6,422
Total	**8,593**	**8,681**

5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, Council assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- Council has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- Council has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

5.8 Leases (continued)

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under *AASB 16 Leases*, Council as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Right-of-use assets	Property $'000	Computers and Telecommunications $'000	Plant and Equipment	Total
Balance at 1 July 2025	4,651	654	-	5,305
Additions	1,880	305	102	2,287
Depreciation charge	(579)	(491)	(34)	(1,104)
Balance at 30 June 2026	**5,952**	**468**	**68**	**6,488**
Balance at 1 July 2024	5,173	1,017	33	6,223
Additions	95	192	-	287
Depreciation charge	(617)	(555)	(33)	(1,205)
Balance at 30 June 2025	**4,651**	**654**	**-**	**5,305**

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Lease liabilities		
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
Less than one year	1,132	1,053
One to five years	3,477	2,520
More than five years	3,845	3,317
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June	**8,454**	**6,890**
Lease liabilities included in Balance Sheet at 30 June:		
Current	810	799
Non-current	5,944	4,640
Total lease liabilities	**6,754**	**5,439**

5.8 Leases (continued)

Short-term and low value leases

Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than existing capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of AUD$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Expenses relating to:		
Leases of low value assets	5	11
Short-term leases	92	-
Total	**97**	**11**
Non-cancellable lease commitments - short-term and low-value leases		
Commitments for minimum lease payments for short-term and low-value leases are payable as follows:		
Payable:		
Within one year	3	3
Later than one year but not later than five years	4	-
Total lease commitments	**7**	**3**

Note 6 Assets we manage

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount at fair value 30 June 2025 $'000	Carrying amount at cost 30 June 2025 $'000	Additions $'000	Contributions $'000	Revaluation $'000	
Land	1,105,893	8,771	-	1,635	(36,401)	
Buildings	229,680	4,910	4,914	-	46,304	
Plant and equipment	-	9,128	2,364	-	-	
Infrastructure	1,065,086	111,306	21,232	7,101	81,709	
Work in progress	-	32,271	19,870	-	-	
Total	**2,400,659**	**166,386**	**48,380**	**8,736**	**91,612**	

Summary of work in progress

	Opening work in progress $'000	Additions $'000	Transfers $'000	Write offs $'000	Closing work in progress $'000
Property	8,373	10,294	(4,337)	(425)	**13,905**
Plant and equipment	660	117	(250)	(401)	**126**
Infrastructure	23,238	9,459	(21,026)	(710)	**10,961**
Total	**32,271**	**19,870**	**(25,613)**	**(1,536)**	**24,992**

The transfer from property work in progress includes $0.310 million that is included in the opening work in progress for property, but was capitalised as plant and equipment or infrastructure.

The transfer from plant and equipment work in progress includes $0.012 million that is included in the opening work in progress for property, but was capitalised as plant and equipment.

The transfer from infrastructure work in progress includes $0.298 million that is included in the opening work in progress for property, but was capitalised as infrastructure.

The write offs from plant and equipment work in progress includes $0.149 million that is included in the opening work in progress for infrastructure, but has been capitalised as an intangible asset.

	Depreciation $'000	Disposal $'000	Impairment $'000	Transfers $'000	Write offs $'000	Carrying amount at fair value 30 June 2026 $'000	Carrying amount at cost 30 June 2026 $'000	Total carrying amount 30 June 2026 $'000
	-	(858)	-	-	-	**1,070,773**	**8,267**	**1,079,040**
	(6,696)	(308)	-	4,027	-	**274,128**	**8,703**	**282,831**
	(1,510)	(644)	-	262	-	**-**	**9,600**	**9,600**
	(25,413)	(1,175)	-	21,324	-	**1,148,327**	**132,843**	**1,281,170**
	-	-	-	(25,613)	(1,536)	**-**	**24,992**	**24,992**
	(33,619)	**(2,985)**	**-**	**-**	**(1,536)**	**2,493,228**	**184,405**	**2,677,633**

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

(a) Property

	Land - specialised $'000	Land - non specialised $'000	Land improvements $'000	
At fair value 1 July 2025	928,793	177,100	-	
At cost 1 July 2025	4,102	1,515	3,154	
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2025	-	-	-	
	932,895	**178,615**	**3,154**	
Movements				
Additions at cost	-	-	-	
Contributions	1,010	625	-	
Revaluation	(35,397)	(1,004)	-	
Disposal at fair value	-	(858)	-	
Disposal at cost	-	-	-	
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	
Transfers	-	-	-	
Write offs	-	-	-	
	(34,387)	**(1,237)**	**-**	
Movements in accumulated depreciation				
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	
Revaluation	-	-	-	
	-	**-**	**-**	
At fair value 30 June 2026	893,396	177,378	-	
At cost 30 June 2026	5,112	-	3,154	
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2026	-	-	-	
Carrying amount	**898,508**	**177,378**	**3,154**	

	Total land $'000	Buildings - specialised $'000	Total buildings $'000	Work in progress $'000	Total property $'000
	1,105,893	420,188	**420,188**	-	**1,526,081**
	8,771	5,042	**5,042**	8,373	**22,186**
	-	(190,640)	**(190,640)**	-	**(190,640)**
	1,114,664	**234,590**	**234,590**	**8,373**	**1,357,627**
	-	4,914	**4,914**	10,294	**15,208**
	1,635	-	**-**	-	**1,635**
	(36,401)	78,002	**78,002**	-	**41,601**
	(858)	(864)	**(864)**	-	**(1,722)**
	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
	-	4,027	**4,027**	(4,337)	**(310)**
	-	-	**-**	(425)	**(425)**
	(35,624)	**86,079**	**86,079**	**5,532**	**55,987**
	-	(6,696)	**(6,696)**	-	**(6,696)**
	-	556	**556**	-	**556**
	-	(31,698)	**(31,698)**	-	**(31,698)**
	-	**(37,838)**	**(37,838)**	**-**	**(37,838)**
	1,070,774	502,368	**502,368**	-	**1,573,142**
	8,266	8,941	**8,941**	13,905	**31,112**
	-	(228,478)	**(228,478)**	-	**(228,478)**
	1,079,040	**282,831**	**282,831**	**13,905**	**1,375,776**

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

(b) Plant and equipment

	Plant, machinery and equipment $'000	Fixtures, fittings and furniture $'000	
At cost 1 July 2025	15,155	2,035	
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2025	(7,793)	(1,937)	
	7,362	**98**	
Movements			
Additions	2,303	36	
Disposal	(2,336)	-	
Transfers	241	21	
Write offs	-	-	
	208	**57**	
Movements in accumulated depreciation			
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,366)	(34)	
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,692	-	
	326	**(34)**	
At cost 30 June 2026	15,363	2,092	
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2026	(7,467)	(1,971)	
Carrying amount	**7,896**	**121**	

	Computers and telecommunications $'000	Artworks $'000	Work in progress $'000	Total plant and equipment $'000
	1,817	1,369	660	**21,036**
	(1,518)	-	-	**(11,248)**
	299	**1,369**	**660**	**9,788**
	-	25	117	**2,481**
	-	-	-	**(2,336)**
	-	-	(250)	**12**
	-	-	(401)	**(401)**
	-	**25**	**(534)**	**(244)**
	(110)	-	-	**(1,510)**
	-	-	-	**1,692**
	(110)	**-**	**-**	**182**
	1,817	1,394	126	**20,792**
	(1,628)	-	-	**(11,066)**
	189	**1,394**	**126**	**9,726**

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads $'000	Bridges $'000	Footpaths and cycleways $'000	Drainage $'000	
At fair value 1 July 2025	1,114,704	18,040	278,489	386,756	
At cost 1 July 2025	7,704	2,639	-	8,859	
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2025	(404,689)	(4,934)	(148,579)	(213,808)	
	717,719	**15,745**	**129,910**	**181,807**	
Movements					
Additions at cost	8,136	571	3,983	3,826	
Contributions	3,796	20	664	2,597	
Revaluation	(1,280)	(1,267)	-	167,355	
Disposal at fair value	(6,276)	(48)	(2,827)	-	
Disposal at cost	-	-	-	-	
Transfers	3,842	2,651	3,569	3,428	
Write offs	-	-	-	-	
	8,218	**1,927**	**5,389**	**177,206**	
Movements in accumulated depreciation					
Depreciation and amortisation	(12,122)	(235)	(4,479)	(4,991)	
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	5,843	20	2,297	-	
Revaluation	1,021	(948)	-	(81,924)	
	(5,258)	**(1,163)**	**(2,182)**	**(86,915)**	
At fair value 30 June 2026	1,107,148	22,606	275,662	572,821	
At cost 30 June 2026	23,478	-	8,216	-	
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2026	(409,948)	(6,097)	(150,761)	(300,723)	
Carrying amount	**720,678**	**16,509**	**133,117**	**272,098**	

	Recreational, leisure and community facilities $'000	Off street car parks $'000	Other infrastructure $'000	Work in progress $'000	Total infrastructure $'000
	-	51,593	-	-	**1,849,582**
	112,735	2,547	6	23,238	**157,728**
	(22,876)	(12,788)	(6)	-	**(807,680)**
	89,859	**41,352**	**-**	**23,238**	**1,199,630**
	3,936	780	-	9,459	**30,691**
	24	-	-	-	**7,101**
	-	(2,495)	-	-	**162,313**
	-	-	-	-	**(9,151)**
	(541)	-	-	-	**(541)**
	6,758	1,076	-	(21,026)	**298**
	-	-	-	(710)	**(710)**
	10,177	**(639)**	**-**	**(12,277)**	**190,001**
	(2,916)	(670)	-	-	**(25,413)**
	357	-	-	-	**8,517**
	-	1,247	-	-	**(80,604)**
	(2,559)	**577**	**-**	**-**	**(97,500)**
	-	49,098	-	-	**2,027,335**
	122,912	4,403	6	10,961	**169,976**
	(25,434)	(12,211)	(6)	-	**(905,180)**
	97,478	**41,290**	**-**	**10,961**	**1,292,131**

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

Acquisition

Initial measurement

Council initially measures its property, infrastructure, plant and equipment assets at cost. The cost of an acquired asset is the fair value of the consideration that Council has provided at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Refer to Note 8.4 for more information on how Council measures fair value.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods	Depreciation Period Years	Threshold Limit $'000
Land and land improvements		
Land	n/a	10
Land improvements	n/a	10
Land under roads	n/a	10
Buildings		
Buildings	20-200	10
Plant and equipment		
Plant, machinery and equipment	3-10	10
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	3-10	10
Computers and telecommunications	3-10	10
Artworks	n/a	10
Infrastructure		
Roads – surfacing	5-50	5
Roads – kerb and channel	70	5
Roads – substructure	30-185	20
Roads – earthworks	n/a	20
Bridges	30-100	5
Footpaths and cycleways	5-50	5
Drainage	80-100	5
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	15-60	10
Off street car parks	2-185	10
Other infrastructure	7-30	2
Intangible assets		
Software	5	10

Land under roads

Land under roads acquired after 30 June 2008 is brought to account at cost. Council does not recognise land under roads that it controlled prior to that date.

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, plant and equipment, infrastructure and intangible assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Land, land improvements, land under roads, roads - earthworks and artworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold, the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken by Patrick Cantelo AAPI 108928 from Westlink Consulting, a qualified independent valuer. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the Comprehensive Income Statement. Where land use is not restricted, highest and best use is assumed to be current use, except where the land is held for sale, or highly likely to be used for an alternative purpose within 12 months of the reporting date.

Specialised land is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2026 are as follows:

	Level 1 $'000	Level 2 $'000	Level 3 $'000	Date of valuation	Type of valuation
Land	-	177,378	-	June 2026	Full
Specialised land	-	-	893,396	June 2026	Full
Specialised buildings	-	-	274,128	June 2026	Full
Total	**-**	**177,378**	**1,167,524**		

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

Valuation of infrastructure

The valuation of bridges and drainage has been determined in accordance with a valuation undertaken by Mr Suthan Srimanoharan, B.Sc (Civil Eng), Asset Engineer, Knox City Council.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table. The full valuations are at fair value based on current replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation. The index based valuations were based on unit costs calculated as at the date of valuation after considering both Rawlinsons unit rates and supplier contract rates, together with the requirements of *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* which now considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation.

A full revaluation of roads and off street car parks will be conducted in 2026-27 (last full revaluation in 2023-24, last index revaluation in 2024-25), and a full revaluation of footpaths and cycleways will be conducted in 2027-28 (last full revaluation in 2024-25).

The valuation is at fair value based on current replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2026 are as follows:

	Level 1 $'000	Level 2 $'000	Level 3 $'000	Date of valuation	Type of valuation
Roads	-	-	697,757	June 2025	Index
Bridges	-	-	16,509	June 2026	Full
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	124,971	June 2025	Full
Drainage	-	-	272,098	June 2026	Full
Off street car parks	-	-	36,992	June 2025	Index
Total	**-**	**-**	**1,148,327**		

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 0% and 50%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between $8 and $1,383 per square metre.

Specialised buildings are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated on a square metre basis and ranges from $298 to $6,799 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary up to 89 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (continued)

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the current replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary up to 185 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Reconciliation of specialised land at fair value		
Parks and reserves	803,323	837,228
Community facilities	32,974	34,476
Civic precinct	45,370	45,043
Transfer station	11,729	12,046
Total specialised land at fair value	**893,396**	**928,793**

6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries

(a) Investment in associates

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Investment in associate accounted for by the equity method is:		
Your Library Limited (formerly Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation)	3,078	2,986

Your Library Limited

Background

The principal activity of Your Library Limited is the operation of libraries. Council's ownership interest of Your Library Limited as at 30 June 2026 was 36.39% (2025: 36.39%) based on Council's contribution of the net assets to the entity on its commencement on 1 July 2023. Council's proportion of voting power as at 30 June 2026 was 33.33% (2025: 33.33%).

On 27 June 2022, Knox City Council, Maroondah City Council and Yarra Ranges Council resolved, pursuant to Section 110(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, to participate in the formation of, and become a founding member of, Your Library Limited (a public company limited by guarantee). The Your Library Agreement reflects the Regional Library Agreement previously in place.

On 30 June 2023, in accordance with Section 330 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation was wound up following the transfer of operations, staff, assets and liabilities from the Corporation to Your Library Limited. Your Library Limited commenced operations on 1 July 2023.

The three member Councils contributed in accordance with the libraries outlined in the Your Library Agreement and have continued as before with the objective of servicing the local community with library services.

Note 6 Assets we manage (continued)

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Fair value of Council's investment in Your Library Limited	**3,078**	**2,986**
Council's share of accumulated surplus		
Council's share of accumulated surplus at start of year	2,986	2,747
Reported surplus/(deficit) for year	92	239
Council's share of accumulated surplus at end of year	**3,078**	**2,986**
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	2,986	2,747
Share of surplus/(deficit) for year	92	239
Carrying value of investment at end of year	**3,078**	**2,986**
Council's share of expenditure commitments		
Operating commitments	192	257
Council's share of expenditure commitments	**192**	**257**

Council directly provides a number of additional resources free of charge to Your Library Limited in relation to the library branches in the Knox municipality. The annual operating cost to Council for providing these facilities are as follows:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Knox City, Rowville, Ferntree Gully, Boronia and Bayswater Library Branches	1,555	1,354

An associate is an entity over which Council has significant influence but not control or joint control. Investment in an associate is accounted for using the equity method of accounting, after initially being recognised at cost.

Changes in the net assets of Your Library Limited are brought to account as an adjustment to the carrying value of the investment.

Note 7 People and relationships

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related parties

Parent Entity

Knox City Council is the parent entity.

Associates

Your Library Limited. Interests in associates are detailed in Note 6.2.

(b) Key management personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Knox City Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Executive Managers are deemed KMP.

Details of KMP at any time during the year are:

Councillors	
Councillor Lisa Cooper (Mayor)	Mayor from 1 July 2025 to 20 November 2025 Councillor from 20 November 2025 to current
Councillor Paige Kennett (Mayor)	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to 20 November 2025 Mayor from 20 November 2025 to current
Councillor Glen Atwell (Deputy Mayor)	Deputy Mayor from 1 July 2025 to 20 November 2025 Councillor from 20 November 2025 to current
Councillor Chris Duncan (Deputy Mayor)	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to 20 November 2025 Deputy Mayor from 20 November 2025 to current
Councillor Meagan Baker	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to current
Councillor Parisa Considine	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to current
Councillor Peter Lockwood	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to current
Councillor Susan Pearce	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to current
Councillor Robert Williams	Councillor from 1 July 2025 to current

Note 7 People and relationships (continued)

7.1 Council and key management remuneration (continued)

Chief Executive Officer and other key management personnel	
Bruce Dobson – Chief Executive Officer	
Judy Chalkley - Director Connected Communities	
Greg Curcio - Director Customer and Performance	1 July 2025 to 22 September 2025
Matt Kelleher – Director City Liveability	1 July 2025 to 28 September 2025 21 November 2025 to 19 April 2026
Matt Kelleher – Interim Director Customer and Performance	29 September 2025 to 20 November 2025
Matt Kelleher – Director Customer and Performance	20 April 2026 to current
Navec Lorkin - Chief Financial Officer	
Jonathan McNally - Interim Director City Liveability	29 September 2025 to 20 November 2025 20 April 2026 to current
Grant Thorne - Director Infrastructure	
Liesl Westberry - Interim Director Customer and Performance	21 November 2025 to 17 April 2026

	2026 No.	2025 No.
Total number of Councillors	9	16
Chief Executive Officer and other key management personnel	8	6
Total key management personnel	**17**	**22**

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

All calculations of remuneration are on an accrual basis and include movements in employee leave provisions.

The remuneration of Key Management Personnel includes the remuneration for Jonathan McNally in his role both as Interim Director City Liveability and as Manager City Safety and Health, and for Liesl Westberry in her role both as Interim Director Customer and Performance and as Manager Strategy and Transformation.

7.1 Council and key management remuneration (continued)

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Total remuneration of Key Management Personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	2,532	2,275
Other long-term employee benefits	27	73
Post-employment benefits	225	187
Termination benefits	72	-
Total	**2,856**	**2,535**

The numbers of Key Management Personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities fall within the following bands:

	2026 No.	2025 No.
$1 - $9,999	-	5
$10,000 - $19,999	-	1
$20,000 - $29,999	-	6
$30,000 - $39,999	1	2
$40,000 - $49,999	4	1
$50,000 - $59,999	1	-
$60,000 - $69,999	1	-
$70,000 - $79,999	1	-
$80,000 - $89,999	1	-
$100,000 - $109,999	-	1
$110,000 - $119,999	1	-
$250,000 - $259,999	2	1
$270,000 - $279,999	1	-
$320,000 - $329,999	1	1
$330,000 - $339,999	-	2
$340,000 - $349,999	1	1
$360,000 - $369,999	1	-
$440,000 - $449,999	1	-
$480,000 - $489,999	-	1
Total	**17**	**22**

Note 7 People and relationships (continued)

7.1 Council and key management remuneration (continued)

(d) Remuneration of other senior staff

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds $170,000 (2024-25: $170,000) and who report directly to a member of the KMP.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	2,997	3,142
Other long-term employee benefits	119	114
Post-employment benefits	372	379
Total	**3,488**	**3,635**

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

	2026 No.	2025 No.
Income range		
$170,000 - $179,999	1	1
$180,000 - $189,999	2	-
$190,000 - $199,999	-	3
$200,000 - $209,999	1	3
$210,000 - $219,999	1	3
$220,000 - $229,999	7	4
$230,000 - $239,999	3	3
$240,000 - $249,999	1	-
Total	**16**	**17**

7.2 Related party disclosure

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contributions to Your Library Limited	4,747	4,510
Total transactions with related parties	**4,747**	**4,510**

Council directly provides a number of additional resources free of charge to Your Library Limited in relation to library branches in the Knox municipality. The annual operating cost to Council for providing these facilities is as follows:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Knox City, Rowville, Ferntree Gully, Boronia and Bayswater Library Branches	1,555	1,354

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There were no balances outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties.

(c) Loans to / from related parties

There were no loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the Council to a related party.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

There were no commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the Council to a related party.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

Developer contributions

As a result of development activity within the Knox municipality, Council has identified as a contingent asset the developer contributions of infrastructure assets and open space contributions to be received in respect of subdivisions that are currently under development totalling $34.149 million (2024-25: $44.967 million).

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
- it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
- the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme. Matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Future superannuation contributions

In addition to the disclosed contributions, Knox City Council has paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super totalling $Nil during 2025-26 (2024-25: $Nil). There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2026. The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2027 are $0.134 million.

Landfill

Council manages a former landfill at Wantirna Reserve. An Environment Protection Authority (EPA) appointed auditor has verified an Aftercare Management Plan for the site, with no further investigation works required at the site.

Council continues to manage its two former landfill sites at Cathies Lane and Llewellyn Reserve as required by the Duty to Manage letter issued by the EPA. Council has been advised that financial assurances are no longer required for these sites, but will continue to put aside appropriate funds for ongoing management at the sites. Council has calculated its ongoing management costs for a period up to 30 June 2034.

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities (continued)

Insurance Claims

As a large local authority with ownership of numerous parks, reserves, roads and other land holdings, the Council is regularly met with claims and demands allegedly arising from an incident that occurs on land belonging to the Council, or allegedly arising from incidents relating to Council business, services or activities. There are ten outstanding insurance claims against the Council in this regard. The Council carries $600 million of public liability and professional indemnity insurance and has an excess of $0.050 million per claim on this policy. Therefore, the maximum liability of the Council in any single claim is the extent of its excess. The primary insurer is Liability Mutual Insurance (MAV Insurance). There are no claims that Council is aware of which would fall outside the terms of the Council's policy.

Liability Mutual Insurance

Council is a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

8.2 Australian Accounting Standards issued but not yet effective

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2026 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards.

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) has issued *AASB 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements*. When applicable AASB 18 supersedes *AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements*. AASB 18 aims to improve how entities communicate in their financial statements, with a focus on information about financial performance in the statement of profit or loss. It is expected to result in presentation and disclosure changes, primarily to Council's Comprehensive Income Statement. AASB 18 is expected to first apply to Council for the 2028-29 financial year.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank and TCV borrowings. Details of the material accounting policy information and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes council to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties (continued)

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the Local Government Act 2020. Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

Other than the borrowings taken out by Council in February 2026, there has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the Council's year end result.

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- council have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities council deal with;
- council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- council only invest surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when council provide a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any allowance for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of Council's operational liquidity requirements, it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required, or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- has an investment policy which specifies the need to meet Council's cash flow requirements;
- has readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- has a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitors budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the Balance Sheet and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

8.3 Financial instruments (continued)

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next twelve months:

- A parallel shift of +1% and -1% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.939%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations, primarily due to all loans taken out by Council to date being on a fixed interest rate.

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement* aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards. For assets where Council adopts a current replacement cost approach to determine fair value, Council considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;

Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and

Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than land under roads, recreational, leisure and community facilities, plant and equipment, bus shelters, artworks and intangibles are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives. At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date the class of asset was revalued.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties (continued)

8.4 Fair value measurement (continued)

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use on an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 2 to 3 years. The valuations are performed either by experienced Council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Asset Class	Revaluation frequency
Land	2 years
Buildings	2 years
Roads	3 years
Bridges	3 years
Footpaths and cycleways	3 years
Drainage	3 years
Off street car parks	3 years
Other infrastructure	3 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increments are credited directly to the relevant asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increment reverses a prior year decrement for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increment is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of asset, revaluation increments and decrements within the year are offset. Refer to Note 9.1(a) for further information.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset. The impairment policy above does not apply to Council's property, infrastructure, specialised buildings and other non-current physical assets subsequently measured at fair value. These are primarily non-cash generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity. Their recoverable amount is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement*, with the consequence that *AASB 136 Impairment of Assets* does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves

(a) Asset revaluation reserve

	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Increase (decrease) $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2026			
Property			
Land	919,802	(36,401)	883,401
Buildings	110,798	46,304	157,102
	1,030,600	**9,903**	**1,040,503**
Plant and equipment			
Artworks	31	-	31
	31	**-**	**31**
Infrastructure			
Roads	517,409	(259)	517,150
Bridges	2,662	(2,215)	447
Footpaths and cycleways	75,039	-	75,039
Drainage	122,893	85,431	208,324
Off street car parks	20,661	(1,248)	19,413
Other infrastructure	-	-	-
	738,664	**81,709**	**820,373**
Total asset revaluation reserve	**1,769,295**	**91,612**	**1,860,907**

Note 9 Other matters (continued)

9.1 Reserves (continued)

	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Increase (decrease) $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2025			
Property			
Land	919,802	-	919,802
Buildings	83,979	26,819	110,798
	1,003,781	**26,819**	**1,030,600**
Plant and equipment			
Artworks	31	-	31
	31	**-**	**31**
Infrastructure			
Roads	396,146	121,263	517,409
Bridges	2,662	-	2,662
Footpaths and cycleways	31,418	43,621	75,039
Drainage	78,863	44,030	122,893
Off street car parks	3,400	17,261	20,661
Other infrastructure	-	-	-
	512,489	**226,175**	**738,664**
Total asset revaluation reserve	**1,516,301**	**252,994**	**1,769,295**

Nature and purpose of asset revaluation reserve

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

9.1 Reserves (continued)

(b) Other reserves

	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Transfer from accumulated surplus $'000	Transfer to accumulated surplus $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2026				
Restricted reserves				
Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve	-	-	-	-
Open space reserve	3,509	4,385	(7,385)	509
Total restricted reserves	**3,509**	**4,385**	**(7,385)**	**509**
Unrestricted reserves				
Aged care reserve	2,562	-	(2,562)	-
Defined benefits reserve	750	-	(750)	-
HACC capital reserve	512	-	(512)	-
Library reserve	1,505	-	(1,505)	-
Revegetation net gain	218	66	-	284
Scoresby Recreation Reserve	267	35	(96)	206
Social housing reserve	3,903	2,780	-	6,683
Unexpended grant reserve (Financial Assistance Grants)	4,700	7,934	(4,700)	7,934
Total unrestricted reserves	**14,417**	**10,815**	**(10,125)**	**15,107**
Total other reserves	**17,926**	**15,200**	**(17,510)**	**15,616**

Note 9 Other matters (continued)

9.1 Reserves (continued)

	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Transfer from accumulated surplus $'000	Transfer to accumulated surplus $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2025				
Restricted reserves				
Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve	72	-	(72)	-
Open space reserve	10,792	5,093	(12,376)	3,509
Total restricted reserves	**10,864**	**5,093**	**(12,448)**	**3,509**
Unrestricted reserves				
Aged care reserve	2,790	-	(228)	2,562
Defined benefits reserve	500	250	-	750
HACC capital reserve	512	-	-	512
Library reserve	1,505	-	-	1,505
Revegetation net gain	153	65	-	218
Scoresby Recreation Reserve	234	33	-	267
Social housing reserve	2,559	1,344	-	3,903
Unexpended grant reserve (Financial Assistance Grants)	-	4,700	-	4,700
Total unrestricted reserves	**8,253**	**6,392**	**(228)**	**14,417**
Total other reserves	**19,117**	**11,485**	**(12,676)**	**17,926**

Nature and purpose of other reserves

Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve (retired in 2024-25)

The purpose of this reserve is to improve basketball stadium facilities within the Knox municipality.

Open space reserve

The Open Space Reserve is used to provide funding for future purchases and improvements of open space. Funding is provided from developer's contributions for open space which is initially recognised in the Comprehensive Income Statement and then transferred to the reserve from accumulated surplus to facilitate separate tracking of the total funds received but not yet spent.

Aged care reserve (retired in 2025-26)

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside the proceeds from the divestment of the Amaroo Gardens Aged Care Facility by Council on 2 November 2011 for aged services and infrastructure within the Knox municipality.

Defined benefits reserve (retired in 2025-26)

The purpose of this reserve is to fund a defined benefits call should it be made.

9.1 Reserves (continued)

HACC capital reserve (retired in 2025-26)

The purpose of this reserve is to refurbish, upgrade and maintain minor capital within the Home and Community Care funded programs.

Library reserve (retired in 2025-26)

The purpose of this reserve is for major capital expenditure for acquiring, refurbishing or redeveloping library premises as standalone premises or as part of community hubs for Knox Library branches."

Revegetation net gain

The purpose of this reserve is to ensure any loss of vegetation through development is re-established in a sustainable location.

Scoresby Recreation reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to invest the income derived from the lease of this site into the Scoresby Recreation Reserve.

Social housing reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to provide funding for the planning, development, construction and/or purchase of social housing for the Knox Community.

Unexpended grant reserve (Financial Assistance Grants)

The purpose of this reserve is to quarantine early payment of Victoria Grants Commission General Purpose and Local Roads Federal Grant funding for use in the following year.

Note 9 Other matters (continued)

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	30,738	12,239
Non-cash adjustments		
Depreciation	33,619	25,659
Amortisation - intangible assets	915	878
Depreciation - right of use assets	1,104	1,205
Allowance for impairment losses	591	508
Borrowing costs	3,567	3,767
Finance costs - leases	332	288
Net (gain)/loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,241	8,820
Contributions - non-monetary assets	(8,736)	(1,899)
Increment in investment in associate	(92)	(239)
Change in operating assets and liabilities		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(1,441)	(3,006)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(721)	104
(Increase)/decrease in contract assets	(337)	1,252
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	858	1,804
Increase/(decrease) in contract and other liabilities	(4,224)	2,991
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	113	(1,092)
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	848	389
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(11)	1
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**58,364**	**53,669**

9.3 Superannuation

Knox City Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation categories receive both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2026, this was 12.0% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2025: 11.5%)).

Defined Benefit

Knox City Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Knox City Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of *AASB 119 Employee Benefits*.

Funding arrangements

Knox City Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

As at 30 June 2025, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.

The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2025 (of which Knox City Council is a contributing employer) was 110.5%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

As at 30 June 2026, a triennial actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is expected to be completed by 31 October 2026.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2026 was 116.9%. Knox City Council was notified of the 30 June 2026 VBI during August 2026 (2025: August 2025). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns	6.2% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	3.0% pa to 30 June 2029 and 2.6% pa thereafter

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2025 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Employer contributions

Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2025 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Knox City Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2026, this rate was 12.0% of members' salaries (11.5% in 2024-25). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2023 triennial valuation.

Note 9 Other matters (continued)

9.3 Superannuation (continued)

In addition, Knox City Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 97%).

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Knox City Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2025 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Knox City Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2025 while a full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Knox City Council is a contributing employer:

	2025 Interim investigation	2024 Interim investigation	2023 Triennial investigation
A VBI surplus	$200.1 million	$108.4 million	$85.7 million
A total service liability surplus	$229.4 million	$141.4 million	$123.6 million
A discounted accrued benefits surplus	$242.8 million	$156.7 million	$141.9 million

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2025.

9.3 Superannuation (continued)

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2025.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2025.

The 2026 triennial actuarial investigation

A triennial actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2026 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2026.

The last interim actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2026 was at 30 June 2025. The VBI of the Defined Benefit category at that date was 110.5%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2025 VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025.

Because the VBI was above 100%, the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position at 30 June 2025 and it is expected that the actuarial investigation will recommend that no change will be necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Knox City Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of scheme	Rate	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Vision super	Defined Benefit	12.0% (2025: 11.5%)	164	235
Other funds	Defined Benefit	12.0% (2025: 11.5%)	-	-
Vision super	Accumulation Fund	12.0% (2025: 11.5%)	3,267	3,340
Other funds	Accumulation Fund	12.0% (2025: 11.5%)	3,943	3,650

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2026.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2027 is $0.134 million.

Note 10 Change in accounting policy

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2025-26 year.

Glossary

Act	means the *Local Government Act 2020*
Assets	means resources controlled by Council as a result of past events and from which future economic benefits or service potential are expected to flow to Council
Budget	means a plan setting out the services and initiatives to be funded for the financial year and how they will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives specified in the council plan
Capital works	means works that create, renew, upgrade or expand Council assets
Council	means Knox City Council
Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan	means Council's four-year strategic plan setting out its objectives, strategies, initiatives and measures, incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
Council plan	means a plan setting out the medium-term strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and resources reflecting vision and aspirations of the community for the next four years
Financial performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators and measures that assess the effectiveness of financial management in a council covering operating position, liquidity, obligations, stability and efficiency
Financial plan	means a plan of the financial and non-financial resources for at least the next ten years required to achieve the strategic objectives in the council plan
Financial statements	means the financial statements and notes prepared in accordance with the Local Government Model Financial Report, Australian Accounting Standards and other applicable standards as they apply to the general purpose financial reports and a statement of capital works and included in the annual report
Financial year	means the period of 12 months starting with 1 July and ending on 30 June each year
Governance	means policies and protocols associated with both the functions of Council and of Council officers to ensure Council is open, transparent, inclusive and accountable to the community

Glossary (continued)

Governance and management checklist	means a prescribed checklist of policies, plans and documents that councils must report the status of in the report of operations, covering engagement, planning, monitoring, reporting and decision making
Grants – non-recurrent income	means grant income received for a 'one off' specific purpose, generally for a particular project
Grants – recurrent income	means grant income received on a regular basis (i.e. quarterly, annually) and granted to Council by another entity for specific or general purposes
Indicator	means what will be measured to assess performance
Infrastructure	means physical assets of the entity or of another entity that contribute to meeting the public's need for access to major economic and social facilities and services
Initiatives	means actions that are one-off in nature and/or lead to improvements in service
Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework	means the integrated approach to planning and reporting set out in the Act and Regulations. The framework includes documents that are required to be prepared by Councils to ensure transparency and accountability to local communities in the performance of functions and exercise of powers under the Act. Community engagement is a key aspect of the ISPRF
Local Government Performance Reporting Framework	means the performance reporting framework established under the *Local Government Act 2020 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*
Measure	means how an indicator will be measured and takes the form of a calculation, typically including a numerator and denominator
Minister	means the Minister for Local Government
Municipality	means the municipal district of Knox
Operating result	means the difference between income and expenses for the financial year
Performance statement	means a statement including the results of the prescribed service indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and included in the annual report
Principal accounting officer	means the person designated by the Chief Executive Officer of a Council as the officer responsible for managing the Council's finances
Regulations	means the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*
Report of operations	means a report containing a description of the operations of the council during the financial year and included in the annual report

Services	means assistance, support, advice and other actions undertaken by a council for the benefit of the local community
Service performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of council services covering appropriateness, quality, cost and service outcomes
Strategies	means high level actions directed at achieving the strategic objectives in the council plan
Strategic indicators	means measures used to assess progress towards achieving the strategic objectives in the Council Plan
Strategic objectives	means the outcomes Council seeks to achieve through the Council Plan
Sustainable capacity indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators measuring whether councils have the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of the local community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future covering financial performance, capacity and governance and management

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARC	Audit and risk committee
CAS	Community access and support
CEO	Chief executive officer
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
Cr	Councillor
CSS	Community satisfaction survey
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EFT	Electronic funds transfer
EV	Electric vehicle
FTE	Full-time equivalent
KCC	Knox City Council
LED	Light-emitting diode
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning and Asexual
LGAs	Local government areas
LGPRF	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
PCD	People, Culture and Development
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
VAGO	Victorian Auditor-General's Office


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Knox City Council

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8.2 Annual Budget 2027-2028 Community Engagement Report and Public Submissions

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Noting
Author: Kate McInnes, Head of Strategy and Business Intelligence
Manager: Manager Strategy and Transformation, Tom Scanlan
Executive: Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
The Annual Planning Cycle for 2027-2028 is currently underway. For a four-week period through July-August 2026, a community engagement program was undertaken to offer insights into the services most valued by the community and actions required to best meet the needs of our community, supporting Council's future 2027-2028 annual budget development.

Engagement activities included an online survey, pop-ups at locations across the municipality, and a targeted engagement from all ten Advisory Committees through a Multi-Advisory Committee Workshop.

The 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget engagement process received feedback from 413 participants, providing valuable insights into community priorities and perceptions of Council services. There were eight written submissions, with six community members requesting to attend the Public Submission Meeting held on Monday 5 October 2026.

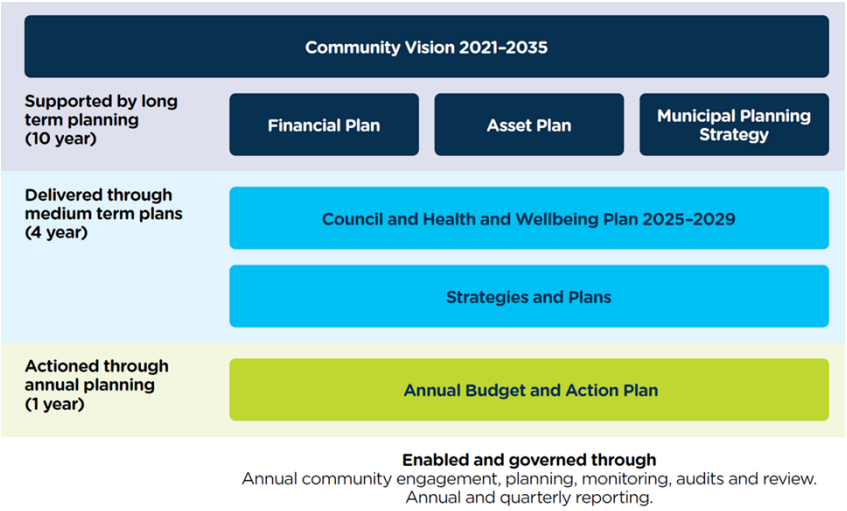
The Community Engagement Outcome Report (Attachment 1) and public submissions (Attachment 2) will provide input into the current Annual Planning Cycle, including the Annual Budget 2027-2028, the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Year Three Actions and Performance Measure targets and annual service planning.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to:
1. Receive and note the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 Community Engagement report (included as Attachment 1).
2. Receive and note the eight public submissions (included as Attachment 2).

1. DISCUSSION

Knox's Integrated Planning Framework provides a structured and aligned approach to translating long-term strategic priorities into annual actions, resourcing and delivery. It integrates the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029, the Organisation Strategy, the Asset Plan and service planning with the Annual Budget and performance reporting cycle, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 is the roadmap for how we are working towards achieving the Community Vision. It sets our strategic directions for the next four years, guiding Council's focus and effort. The priorities for supporting, protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do and are integrated across all Council services and initiatives.

The Annual Budget details the mechanism for how we will deliver and fund our community priorities. To ensure Council remains responsive to the community's evolving needs and priorities, each financial year, the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 annual actions and performance measure targets are published in the Annual Budget.

Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 Community Engagement

The Annual Planning Cycle for 2027-2028 is currently underway. To inform the development of the Annual Plan and Budget for 2027-2028, Council has undertaken community engagement. This engagement ran from 22 July to 23 August 2026. The community engagement sought to understand:

- What the community would like to see delivered in 2027-2028 to progress the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Community ideas for actions or projects in a specific location in Knox.
- The services our community think deliver most value to the community.
- If there are any other items our community would like considered for the 2026-27 planning and budget process or future years.
- If community members would like to present their feedback to Councillors at a public submissions meeting.

A total of 413 members of our community provided feedback through a variety of activities, including an online survey, pop-ups at locations across the municipality and representation from all ten Advisory Committees through a Multi Advisory Committee workshop. The Community Engagement Report has been included in Attachment 1 for noting. This will be published on Have Your Say and any member of the community who has subscribed to this engagement will be notified of the availability of this report.

In addition to the community engagement results, there are several other inputs that will inform the 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget, including:

- Community engagement results from the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Community engagement results from the Annual Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Changes to the external environment including reforms and population trends.
- Risk assessments, legislative requirements, service planning and reviews, community satisfaction data, voice of customer data, service performance trends, complaints, and changes in service volumes.

Formal Submissions
As part of the Annual Plan and Budget community engagement, the community was invited to make a formal submission and speak to Councillors on their submission. Eight formal submissions were received, with six members of the community requesting to speak to their submission at the Public Submission Meeting on Monday, 5 October 2026.

Next Steps
- Have Your Say will be updated to include the Community Engagement Outcomes report. Any member of the community who has subscribed to this engagement will be notified of the availability of this report, closing the loop on the engagement program.
- This community feedback will form a key input into the Annual Planning Cycle to enable service areas to plan for the communities' priorities and needs and develop the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028.
- In May 2027, the draft Budget 2027-2028, including the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Year Three Actions and Performance Measure Targets will be released for community questions. The Budget 2027-2028 will be presented to Council for consideration in June 2027.

2. ENGAGEMENT
The Annual Plan and Budget community engagement process ran from 22 July to 23 August 2026. 413 community members participated in the engagement. This community engagement opportunity was promoted extensively across various communication channels including Council's website, roadside banners, Knox News articles and social media.

Residents and ratepayers received links to the online survey and activities through a range of channels:
- Knox News;
- On hold message during the engagement period;
- Social media posts;
- Email to all Have Your Say subscribers;
- Web news articles.

The online survey on the Have Your Say page detailed the days and times of the five pop-up activities.

It is important to note that the feedback obtained through this engagement activity is not statistically representative of the Knox community as a whole. The findings should therefore be considered indicative of the views of participating community members rather than a definitive representation of broader community sentiment. The extensive engagement undertaken in 2024 as part of the development of the overarching Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 involved a broader and more diverse cross-section of the community, including a representative deliberate panel, was designed to provide a statistically representative understanding of community priorities.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2027-2028 Annual Budget will contain Council and Health and Wellbeing Year 3 actions as well as financial resourcing for a wide range of programs that deliver important community services to the Knox community. The community engagement will influence these social outcomes, as well as supporting the identification of annual actions to respond to our Health and Wellbeing Priorities.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

The annual planning and budget process will support Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation. Specifically, utilising the community feedback, annual actions will be developed to progress the achievement of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, including the Health and Wellbeing Priority to build resilience to emergencies and threats, including climate change. Further, the Annual Budget will positively impact on Council's Net Zero 2030 target by funding activities identified in the Climate Response Plan.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The community feedback collected as a part of the Annual Plan and Budget community engagement will drive the identification of annual actions that will have positive environmental implications.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The community engagement program and required resources for delivery are funded within existing operational budgets. The Community Engagement Report outcomes will be considered as part of the development of the Annual Budget 2027-2028 and the annual Service Planning Program, including resource and financial implications.

7. RISKS

The key risks associated with the Annual Plan and Budget community engagement remain largely consistent with those identified and experienced last year. These include a risk the community who participated may feel they have not been adequately heard which is mitigated by the community engagement report being made available publicly online and subscribers updated regularly as the development of the draft Budget 2027-2028 progresses.

A further risk is not all community and community groups are heard from. The mitigation for this is noting and acknowledging the current engagement is not designed to be statistically representative of the municipality.

These risks are moderate and have been mitigated with appropriate controls.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

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 - Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 Community Engagement Report [**8.2.1** - 19 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Budget 2027-2028 - Public Submissions [**8.2.2** - 17 pages]

Annual Plan and Budget Priorities 2027-2028 community engagement report

Through July and August 2026, we conducted a community engagement program to identify which services are most valued by our community, and which actions they would like Council to prioritise to improve Knox in 2027-2028. The engagement program ran from 22 July to 23 August 2026.

Our 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget engagement had three distinct purposes:

- To inform our 2027-2028 Budget and future budgets
- To inform the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan year three actions and performance measure targets
- To inform our annual service planning program for 2027-2028.

In addition to these community engagement results, there are several other inputs that will inform the 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget including:

- Community engagement results from the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Changes to the external environment including reforms, cost of living changes, population trends.
- Risk assessments, legislative requirements, service planning and reviews, community satisfaction data, voice of customer data, service performance trends, complaints, and changes in service volumes.

Engagement approach

The engagement program was designed to capture input from people motivated to participate through Council's online engagement page, while also reaching a broader cross-section of the community through five pop-up activities held at locations across the municipality. Targeted engagement activities, including representation from ten Advisory Committees through a Multi-Advisory Committee workshop, ensured the perspectives of key audiences were captured.

The engagement captured feedback through the following activities:

- Budget allocation / voting to understand what services they believe the community value the most
- Question to propose actions for the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 including location where relevant
- Formal written submissions.

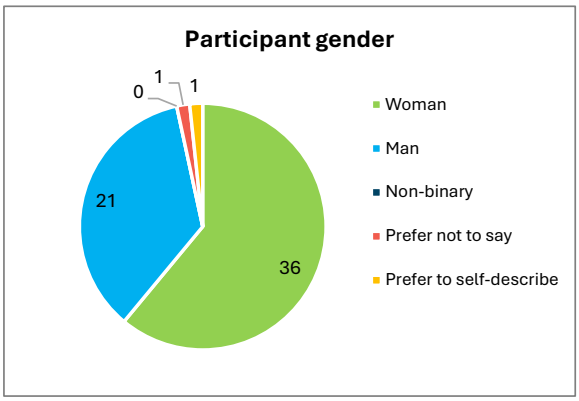
Who completed the activities?

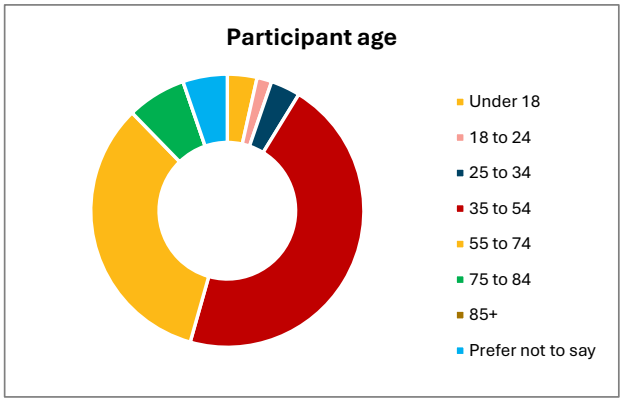
- 413 participants from the Knox community
- Eight members of the community submitted a public submission, with 6 of these 8 members of the community requesting to attend the public submission meeting
- Approximately 35 children submitted a drawing at various pop-ups sessions.

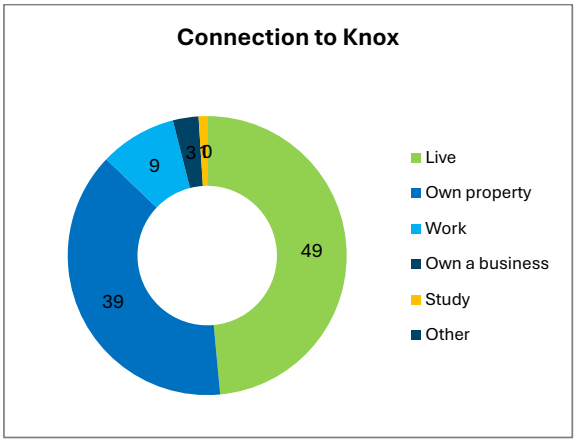
The demographic profile of respondents to the online survey is summarised in the following charts, noting demographic data was not collected at the pop-up activities. Respondents were asked to provide their connection to Knox and relevant suburb; all other demographic information was voluntary.

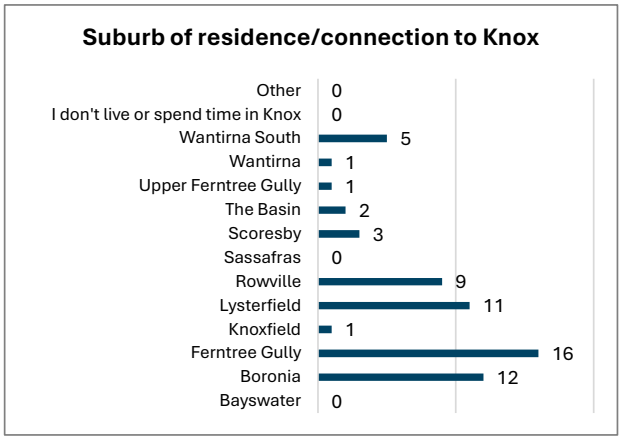
It is important to note that the feedback obtained through this engagement activity is not statistically representative of the Knox community as a whole. The findings should therefore be considered indicative of the views of participating community members rather than a definitive representation of broader community sentiment.

In contrast, the extensive engagement undertaken in 2024 as part of the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 involved a broader and more diverse cross-section of the community, including a representative deliberative panel, and was designed to provide a statistically representative understanding of community priorities. As a result, the findings from that engagement process remain the most comprehensive and representative reflection of community views across Knox.









Breakdown of Activities

1. Service Budgeting – *Which services do you think the community value the most?*

Using the 'Fund It' tool, participants were asked to identify which services they believe are most valued by the community by allocating a budget across Council's 24 customer facing services, each supported by a description to aid understanding, and asked to allocate a total budget of $1,000 across these services. It is important to note

that some Council services are legislatively required or essential to Council's operation and must be delivered regardless of how they are ranked. This engagement activity was selected because it provided a simple and accessible method for community members to participate in a values-based ranking exercise. Participants were allocated a notional dollar amount to distribute across Council services, enabling them to indicate the relative value they place on each service. The dollar values are intended to reflect perceived community value and should be interpreted as an indication of both the community's desire for Council investment in a service and the importance placed on Council's advocacy role in that area.

2. Actions and Ideas - ***What actions would you like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028?***

Participants were given the opportunity to share what actions they would like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028 and support delivery of the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Participants were invited to indicate whether their suggested action or project related to a specific location within Knox. Where applicable, a mapping tool was provided to enable respondents to identify the exact location.

Participants were also invited to provide any additional comments, including suggestions for future priorities, projects or initiatives that Council should consider beyond 2027-2028, as well as feedback on the survey questions.

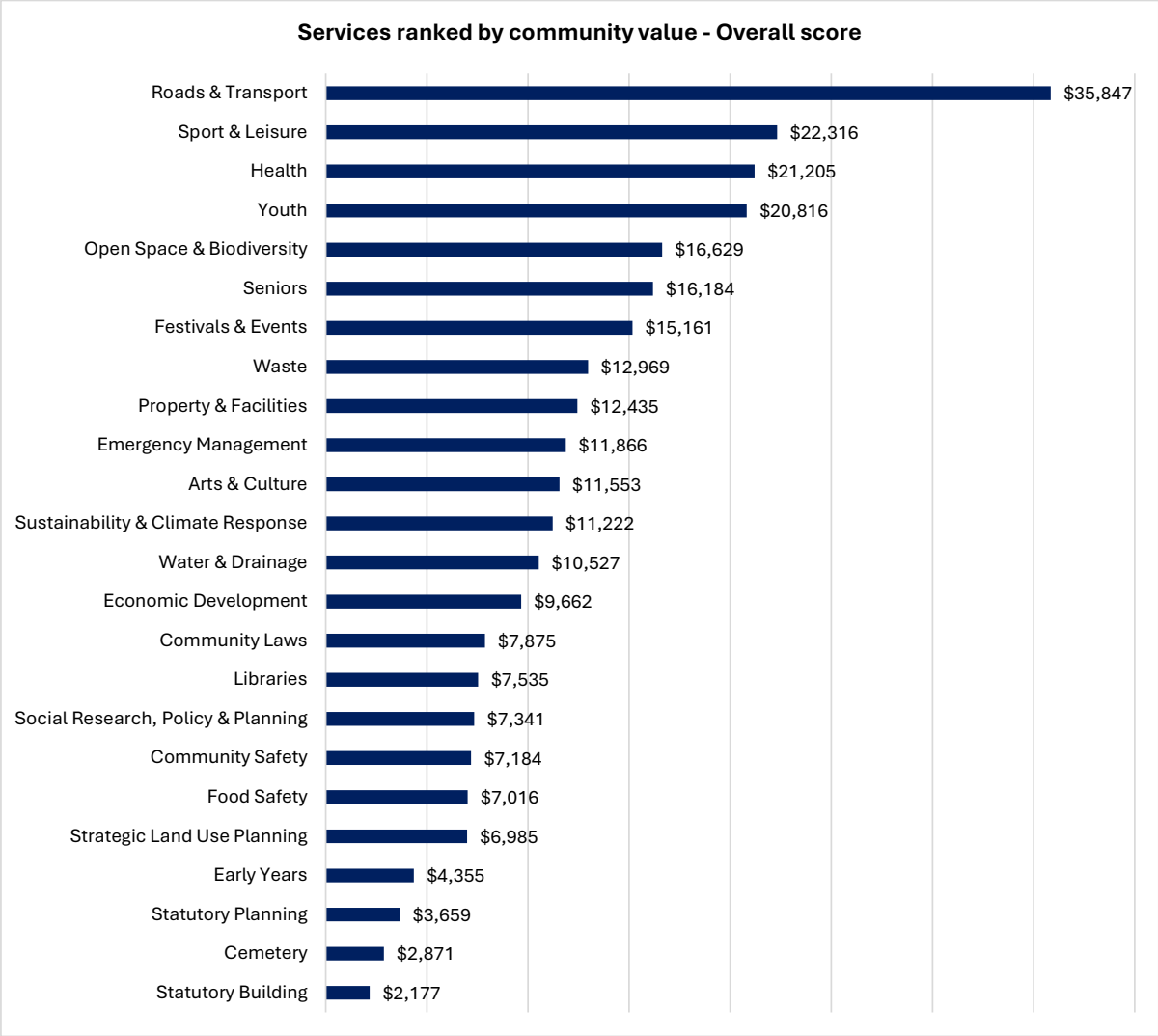
3. Public submissions

Respondents were invited to make a written submission to Council and present to Council at a public meeting.

Results

Service Budgeting activity consolidated results

The contributions from all participants across the Have Your Say online survey, Multi Advisory Committee workshop, and Pop-up activities have been consolidated into the below:

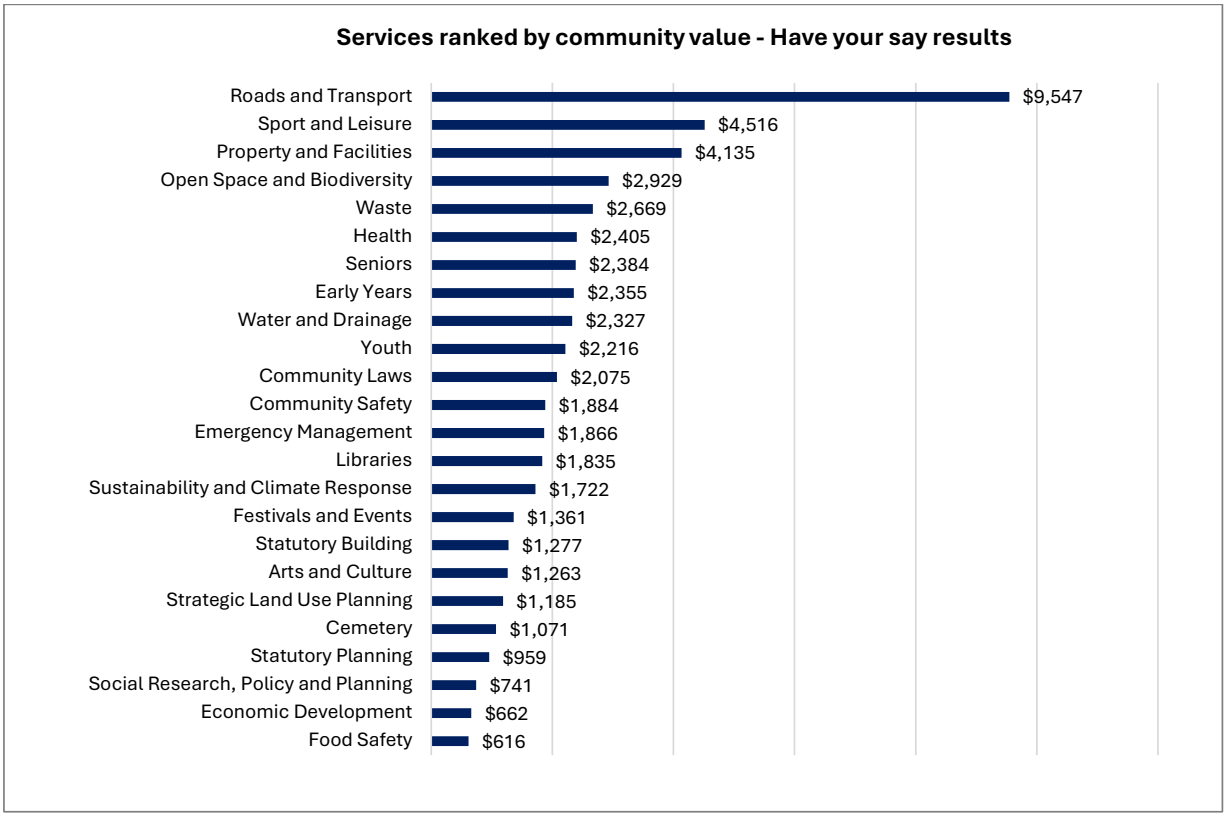


Note: Participants were given $1000 to allocate to the services they believe are most valued by the community. The $ value represents combined contributions from all participants. A more detailed breakdown of the results for both the Service Budgeting and Actions and Ideas activities, by engagement method, is provided in the following sections.

Have Your Say Online survey

Community interest in the project was demonstrated through strong participation in the online survey, which was open from 27 July to 23 August 2026. Over the engagement period, the Have Your Say page attracted:

- 1814 project page views
- 1083 visitors
- 116 online contributions (62 survey and 54 Fund It tool)



Note: Have your say participants could choose to allocate their $1000 in any way they chose.

Actions and Ideas activity: *What actions would you like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028?*

Community members shared extensive feedback through the survey, with 41 responses received on priorities for 2027-2028. Many responses included multiple recommendations, providing rich insights into community expectations and needs. An additional 25 comments were submitted identifying other issues and opportunities that Council should consider in future years.

All comments received through the online survey were reviewed and analysed. To assist with reporting and interpretation, comments have been grouped into key themes and relevant Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Theme based on the topics raised by participants.

Note: A complete list of verbatim comments is included in Appendix A for reference.

Roads, Traffic and Transport (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Road upgrades and maintenance
- Improve traffic safety, pedestrian crossings and speed management
- Enhance cycling infrastructure, footpaths and active transport connections
- Improve public transport access and connectivity

Parks, Recreation and Open Space (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Playground upgrades and park improvements
- Improve public toilets, seating and community amenities
- More dog parks, exercise facilities and recreation opportunities
- Accessible and family-friendly open spaces

Environment, Trees and Sustainability (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Increased tree planting and shade
- Bush regeneration and biodiversity initiatives
- Climate change and sustainability actions
- Streetscape beautification and landscaping

Maintenance and Public Amenity (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Graffiti removal and reducing illegal dumping
- Increase grass mowing, landscaping and street sweeping
- Road, footpath and public infrastructure maintenance
- Improved cleanliness and presentation of public spaces

Community Safety and Amenity (Being a strong voice for safety)

- Road and pedestrian safety
- Improve street lighting and CCTV
- Anti-social behaviour and local law enforcement
- Noise management and protecting neighbourhood amenity

Waste and Resource Recovery (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Hard rubbish collections
- Bin services and litter management
- Illegal dumping prevention
- Community waste education

Community Facilities and Services (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Libraries and leisure facilities
- Children's services and early years education
- More aged care and support services
- Enhanced and more community spaces and facilities

Planning, Housing and Neighbourhood Character (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Housing density and development
- Local shopping, cafés and activity centres
- Parking and transport planning
- Preserving neighbourhood character and liveability

Community Connection and Inclusion (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Community events and celebrations
- Opportunities for social connection
- Improved communication and engagement
- Inclusive and connected neighbourhoods

Other Feedback

- Knox Annual Budget should provide for more public funded low cost EV Charging Stations.
- Volunteer money that goes to local CFA ultimately ends up in other rural and regional brigades.
- Reduce seeming prioritised spending on minorities. Help the majority of people.
- Stop unnecessary spending on things like waste bins and lid changes.
- Recognise the needs of The Basin are very different to Boronia and other areas.

Multi Advisory Committee Workshop

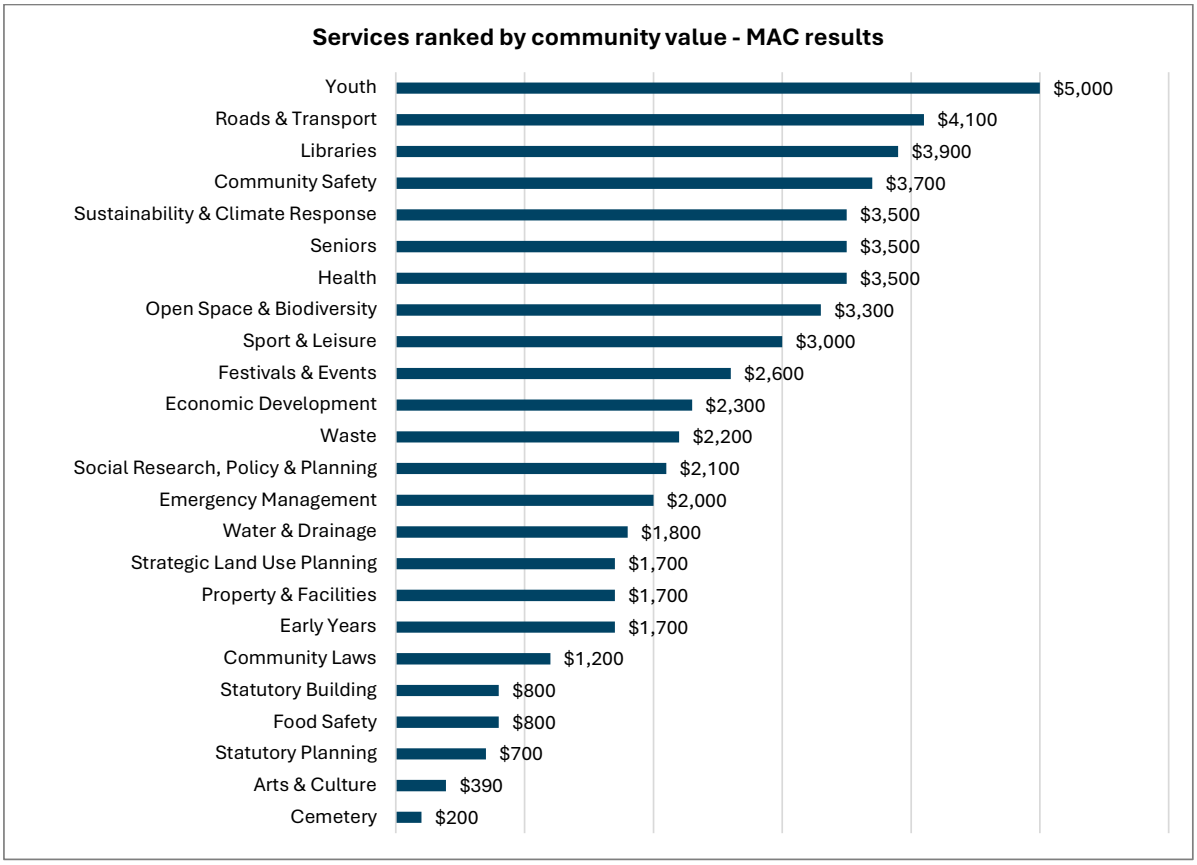
A Multi Advisory Committee (MAC) workshop was held on 22 July 2026, bringing together representatives from all ten committees. The activities in these workshops replicated those in the online survey and pop-up sessions.

The Multi Advisory Committee is made up of the following committees:

- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Early Years Advisory Committee
- Art and Culture Advisory Committee
- Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee
- Environment Advisory Committee
- Knox Youth Advisory Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee
- Active Ageing Advisory Committee
- Transformation and Governance Advisory Committee

There were 55 community members present at the Multi Advisory Committee.

The following graph reflects the results of the budget exercise carried out by this cohort.



Note: Multi Advisory Committee participants were given 10 sticky dots each worth $100. They could allocate their $1000 in $100 blocks.

The results should be viewed in the context of the workshop's participant profile. Youth representatives made up a significant proportion of attendees, which may have influenced voting patterns and contributed to stronger support for youth-related priorities. This should be considered when comparing these results with findings from other engagement activities.

Actions and Ideas activity:

The key themes emerging from this activity are outlined below along with the relevant Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Theme:

Community safety and local amenity (Being a strong voice for safety)

- Better street lighting and public safety
- Boronia safety improvements (especially station/mall precinct)

Transport, roads and active travel (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Train to Rowville

- Repair roads, potholes and footpaths
- Improve public transport generally
- Better bike path connectivity

Environment, greening and biodiversity (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- More trees and urban greening
- Community gardens and biodiversity corridors

Community facilities, amenities and accessibility (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Upgrade Knox Leisureworks
- Accessibility improvements
- More public toilets and amenities

Community connection, youth and creativity (Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Multicultural/community connection programs
- More youth spaces and youth services
- Arts, music and creative spaces

Place activation and renewal (Enhancing community connection to vital services)

- Activate and revitalise Boronia.

Pop-Up events

Five pop-up sessions were conducted to enable broad community input into the development of the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 scheduled across a range of times, days and locations across Knox to maximise accessibility. Approximately 287 community members participated across the five sessions.

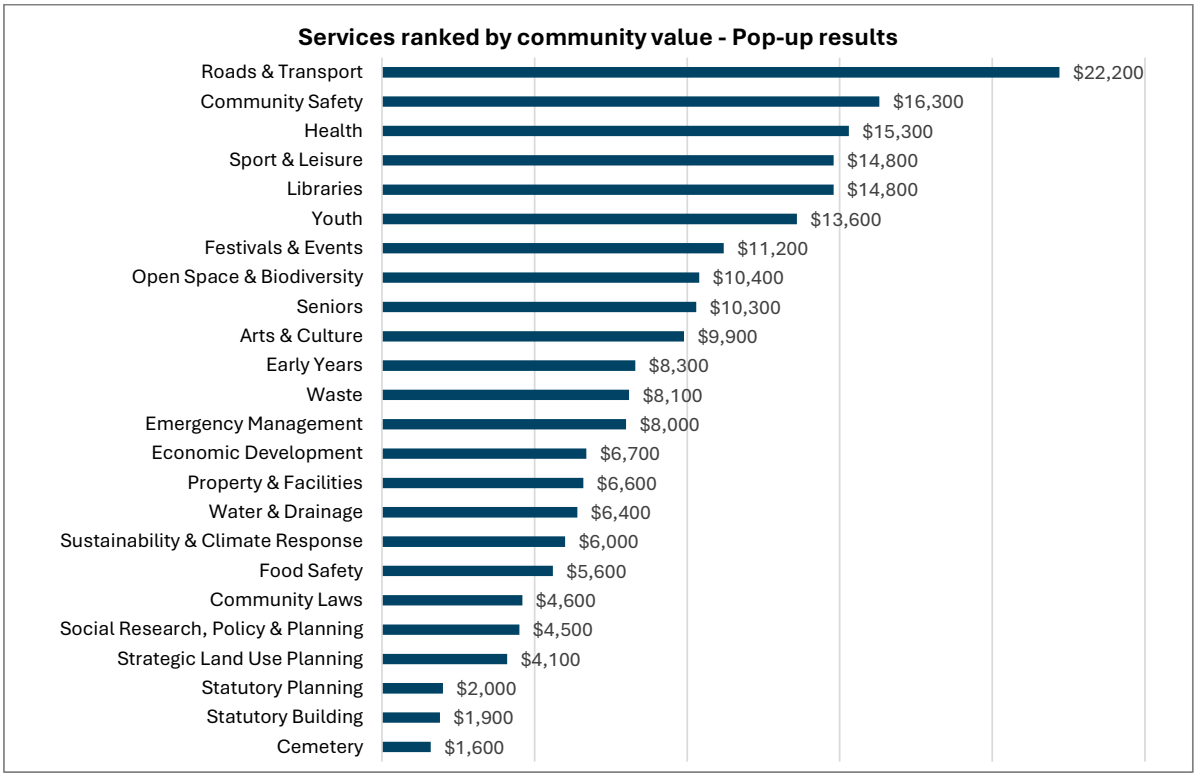
Location	Date	Times
Knox Library	Friday 31 July 2026	10:30am - 12:30pm
Knox Leisureworks	Saturday 8 August 2026	9:00am - 11:00am
Knox Library	Saturday 15 August 2026	10:30am - 12:30pm
Rowville Community Centre	Thursday 20 August 2026	10:00am - 2:00pm
State Basketball Centre	Saturday 22 August 2026	10:30am - 12:00pm

Participants completed the same prioritisation exercise in a face-to-face format to ensure consistency with the online survey and Multi Advisory Committee workshop. Participants were provided with 10 dots, each representing $100, and asked to allocate them across the same 24 external services.

Facilitators observed that some participants at the pop-up sessions chose not to allocate their full $1,000 budget. While facilitators reminded participants that they were able to spend the entire allocation in any way they wished, some indicated that they did not want to use the full amount. The number of participants who made this choice

could not be quantified, as interactions were generally brief. This observation was recorded during facilitator debrief sessions.

Participants also had the opportunity to speak directly with Council officers and Councillors, discuss ideas and potential actions, and provide place-based feedback using a map of Knox.



Note: Pop-up participants were given 10 sticky dots each worth $100. They could allocate their $1000 in $100 blocks.

Please see Appendix B for a breakdown of results by location.

Actions and Ideas activity:

Participants were given the opportunity to provide any additional information for Council to consider as part of the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 or future years, including further comments or context to support their budget allocation.

Feedback received at the pop-ups were generally similar to what we heard via the Have Your Say survey. They have been themed up as follows:

Community safety continues to be a major concern

- Safety, youth crime, hooning, break-ins, CCTV and lighting were recurring issues.

Waste collection and hard rubbish are high-friction topics

- Weekly bins, hard rubbish mess, green waste/general waste balance and compostable bags came up repeatedly.

Rowville has distinct infrastructure and access concerns

- Many Rowville residents feel they lack local shops, walkability, public transport, commercial zoning and community infrastructure.

Libraries, neighbourhood houses and community centres are highly valued

- Residents appreciate them but want longer hours, more staffing, more promotion and more programming.

Paths, lighting and active transport matter for safety and health

- Walking/cycling path maintenance, lighting, safe night running, footpaths and bike routes came up often.

Residents value green spaces but are mindful of spending

- Some want more trees, wildlife space and parks, while others feel Council should avoid over-investing in parks, leisure centres or cricket nets.

Children, youth and seniors need targeted support

- Feedback highlighted community desire for holiday activities, youth classes, crime prevention, seniors' outings, aged care and accessible programs.

Formal Submissions

Participants were also invited to make a formal submission on the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 and speak to Councillors on their submission. All participants were offered this opportunity, with attendees of the Multi Advisory Committee workshop and Pop-ups being directed to the Have Your Say website for further information.

Eight formal submissions were received, with six members of the community requesting to speak to their submission at the Public Submission Meeting on Monday, 5 October 2026. These can be found in Attachment 2.

Children's Drawings and Statements

Children attending the sessions were invited to complete colouring activities, providing a creative way to show what they value and love about where they live.

Common themes include:

- Spending time with family and pets
- Bike riding and swimming
- Playing outdoors
- Socialising
- Sport
- Home, garden and bedroom

- Use of park, footy ground and playground facilities for socialising, play and walking
- Close proximity of services
- Closeness to the mountains, forest, birds, flowers, open spaces, rainbows and the sun









Verbatim comments include:

- *"There are lots of parks and playgrounds where I can ride my bike and play with my friends."*
- *"We can go to the basketball court and skate park, and there's always something fun to do."*
- *"I like how there are lots of trees and nature."*
- *"The library is cool because I can borrow books and meet new friends."*
- *"(Westfield Knox) is fun because we get an ice-cream and watch movies."*
- *"My school is close by and I've made lots of friends here."*
- *"I like walking my dog on my bike with my mum and dad."*

Appendix A - Have Your Say Online survey verbatim comments

The information below has been collated from the comments submitted through the online survey. To assist with analysis and reporting, feedback has been grouped into key themes based on the topics raised by participants. The commentary has been retained as provided wherever possible to preserve the intent and views expressed by community members.

Roads, Traffic, Footpaths and Transport

- Speed humps in Mountain Gate shop carparks. Too many near misses occurring. Cars too fast and not safe for pedestrians.
- Raised footpaths are a tripping hazard.
- Pot holes.
- We would like to see Cornish Rd upgraded for improved safety and access to Lysterfield Park.
- Sealing of Cornish Road and line marking for cycle path to provide safe access to Lysterfield Lake Park mountain bike tracks. Numerous near misses with oncoming cyclists on blind bends.
- The upgrade and asphalting of Cornish Road Lysterfield for improved access to the National Park.
- Cornish Rd upgraded, has not been upgraded for 100 years and needs to be safer and allow traffic to park safely into the park.
- As new residents to Cornish Road, we see the widening/sealing/upgrading of the road as a high priority.
- Upgrade the Napoleon Road to improve road safety and maintenance. Implement consistent speed limits.
- Napoleon road is impossible to turn left or right onto past 7/11 headed to Glenfern Road at peak hour.
- Push for Napoleon Road duplication and Dorset Road extension.
- Clear all the pot holes on the roads, increase foot paths and off the road bicycle tracks along the main roads.
- Road and footpath repair.
- Active transportation connections.
- Install new and improve existing footpaths.
- Fix and widen local roads.
- A mini bus service in the Timbertop Estate so we can catch the bus on Stud Road.
- A pathway leading to Wellington Road along the back track in the wetlands.
- Improvement of some footpaths in the Ferntree Gully area.
- We live on Cornish Rd... It's close to impossible to cross Wellington Road on foot.
- The intersection Kellets Rd/Wellington Rd is super dangerous.
- Cycle track extension and Pedestrian crossing on Wellington Road opposite Kellets Road for mountain bikers.
- Upgrade Napoleon Road and introduce consistent speed limits.
- Better Road access out in and out of Knox area to Monash area. Connecting Napoleon Road and Dorset Road.
- Make road crossing easier.

Parks, Playgrounds and Recreation

- Fix and reopen the outdoor pool at Knox Leisureworks.
- Put dog refuse bins at entrances to parks especially Lakewood Reserve.

- Also, a toilet at Lakewood Reserve.
- More fenced off parks so families can safely run around and enjoy the parks.
- I would like the Blackwood Park and surrounding Koolamara area revamped.
- Improvement to playgrounds.
- The Liberty Avenue Reserve playground needs a desperate makeover.
- More dog parks around Lysterfield.
- Destination Parkland zoned with café spaces. Sealed walking tracks encircling parkland spaces, also with seating and rubbish bins.
- Upgrade Pinehill Reserve Playground in Rowville.
- Add outdoor exercise equipment and a bike track.
- Continue to care for the Quarry Park which is much enjoyed.
- Yes, the kids want a 1/2 size basketball court to engage and practice with their friends and possible BBQ area and shelter/toilets.

Environment, Trees and Sustainability

- Ivy that seems to take over along the bike tracks could be jumped on early.
- I would like to see trees planted in every possible space, car parks especially.
- Spend more money on bush regeneration please.
- More green spaces, more trees planted, more focus on waste education and climate change.
- Massive gum trees not suitable for residential streets removed and replaced.
- More public electric chargers.
- More flowers and trees.
- More plant diversity, deciduous trees and flowers to beautify Knox.
- Plant more large, beautiful trees, particularly where there are large developments.
- Acquiring and developing additional open green space to offset new housing.
- Planting of additional trees.
- Plant more trees to mitigate against climate change.
- The enormous gumtrees need to go, they are messy and dangerous.
- Oak trees look much more appealing.
- Planting attractive deciduous trees along major roadways to beautify the area.
- Plant more trees everywhere.
- Increase the amount of trees/shade we have.

Maintenance, Cleanliness and Presentation

- Please wash the street signs and beautify the roundabouts with nice foliage.
- The Timbertop/Seebeck roundabout really needs a facelift.
- Maintenance of centre median strip on Burwood Hwy and Ferntree Gully Road.
- Better hard rubbish collection.
- Ongoing grass cutting and maintained landscaping on roads.
- Landscaping and improvements in and around the toilet block and vacant land adjacent to the railway crossing in Ferntree Gully.
- Clean up all the graffiti in Knox.
- A real focus on graffiti removal.

- Another focus should be rubbish removal.
- To improve the maintenance of maple trees along Severn Crescent, Rowville during autumn.
- More frequent street sweeping and leaf collection during autumn.
- More proactive care of facilities.
- Don't leave repairs and cleanups until there are complaints.
- Regular onsite visits from staff to review potential problems.
- Also cut the grass more often.
- Have Vic Roads maintain the median strips better on public roads.
- Incentivise residents to maintain their front yards and nature strips.

Community Safety, Local Laws and Amenity

- Conduct community education and awareness campaigns of the existence of local laws and the reasons for them.
- Have officers actually attend and investigate all complaints of polluters impacting on amenity.
- Increased lighting and safety in populated areas.
- Noise from neighbouring properties.
- Night time loud music.
- Daytime excessive basketball bouncing.
- Crime prevention through more CCTV and street lighting.
- Better management of antisocial behaviour, including drug use.
- Proactive council action on noise complaints.
- Noise complaints to be seriously addressed for day and night time.
- My first consideration is personal. I had an accident in the lower Mountain Gate carpark from a motorist driving the wrong direction.

Waste and Rubbish Services

- Resumption of twice yearly hard rubbish collections.
- Better hard rubbish collection.
- We should have our red bins upgraded to the same size as the yellow and green bins.
- We have noticed that rubbish has been dumped more now due to this reason.
- More focus on waste education.
- Continue the two hard rubbish per year, or reintroduce the tip voucher system.
- Keep the FOGO and rubbish standards and services as they are.
- Additional rubbish and recycling bins in parks and public spaces.
- Control illegal rubbish dumping.

Community Facilities, Libraries and Leisure

- Library enhancement.
- A reduction in Knox Council's debt. To retain the Miller's Homestead Library.
- Rowville library should also have a larger storytime room.
- Fix and reopen the outdoor pool at Knox Leisureworks.
- Create more community spaces such as small gardens, barbecue areas or meeting places where neighbours can gather.

- Add more third-spaces to the community.

Children, Families, Aged Care and Social Services

- Improve the quality within the children services especially the childcare centres.
- The educators are amazing however, they are not recognised for their amazing efforts.
- Make My Aged Care services more available to the aged.
- Educators should be a part of the Knox Council end of year Christmas celebrations.
- Restore kindergartens.
- Help with the cost of living crisis. Food Relief services assistance.
- Increase public and social housing/facilities to help people get back onto their feet.

Planning, Housing and Development

- Less multi unit (6+) dwellings.
- Changes to zoning in Rowville to allow for the development of more commercial property infrastructure.
- Zoning for shops and cafes throughout Lysterfield and Rowville estates.
- No more multi slums adding cars and ugly units to our streets.
- Update the planning rules to make sure that there is enough off street parking on site.
- Acquiring and developing additional open green space to offset new housing.

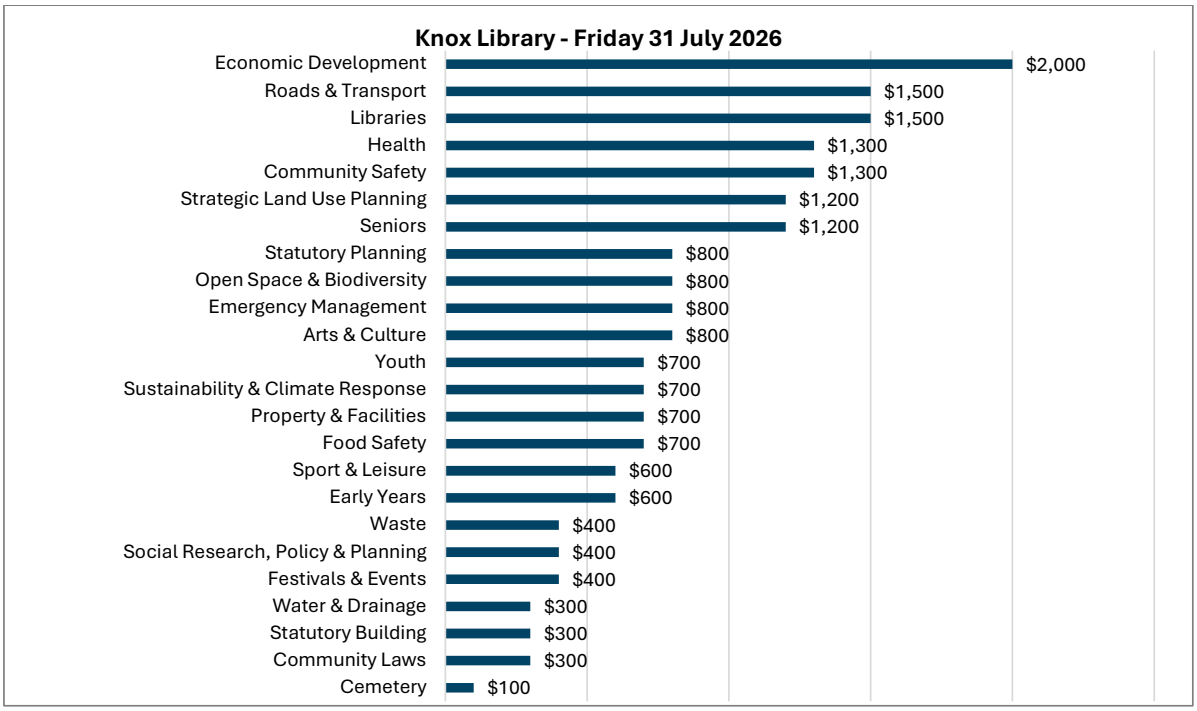
Community Connection, Events and Communication

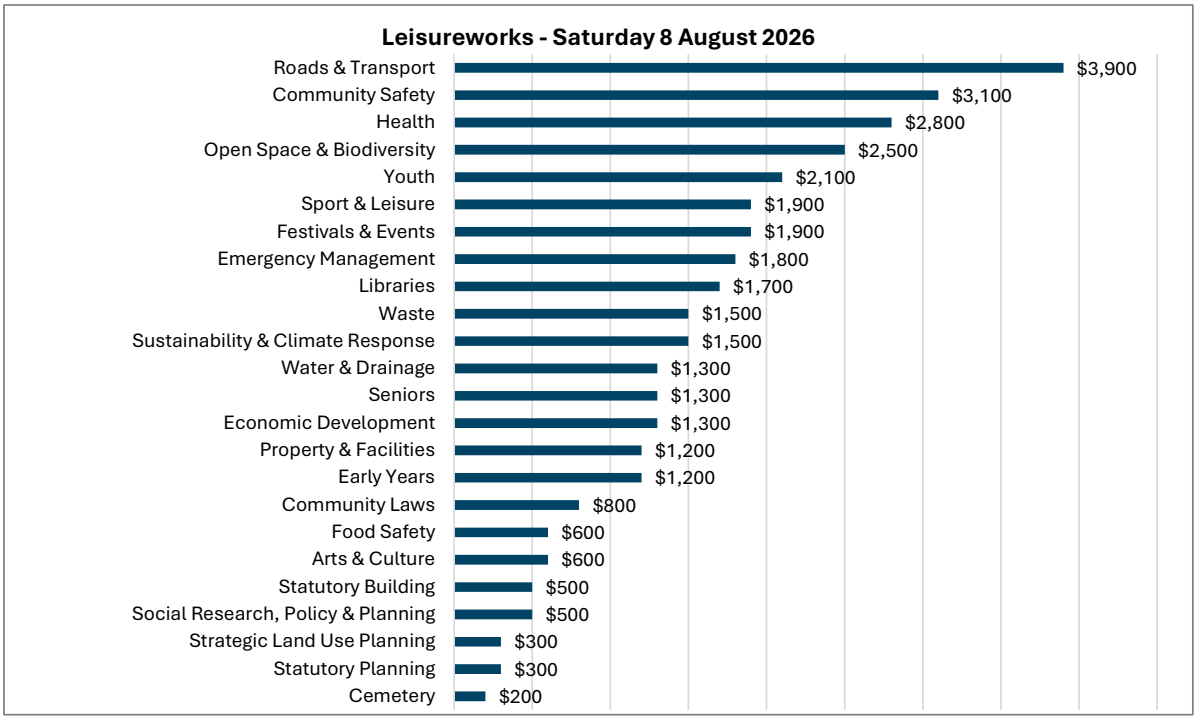
- Christmas decorations.
- We lack character and celebrations around the Christian calendar.
- Support more community events such as markets, outdoor movie nights and neighbourhood festivals.
- Create more community spaces where neighbours can gather.
- More connectivity and social spaces in largely residential areas.
- Council does a great job, its major issues are with communications to residents.
- You do a great job.

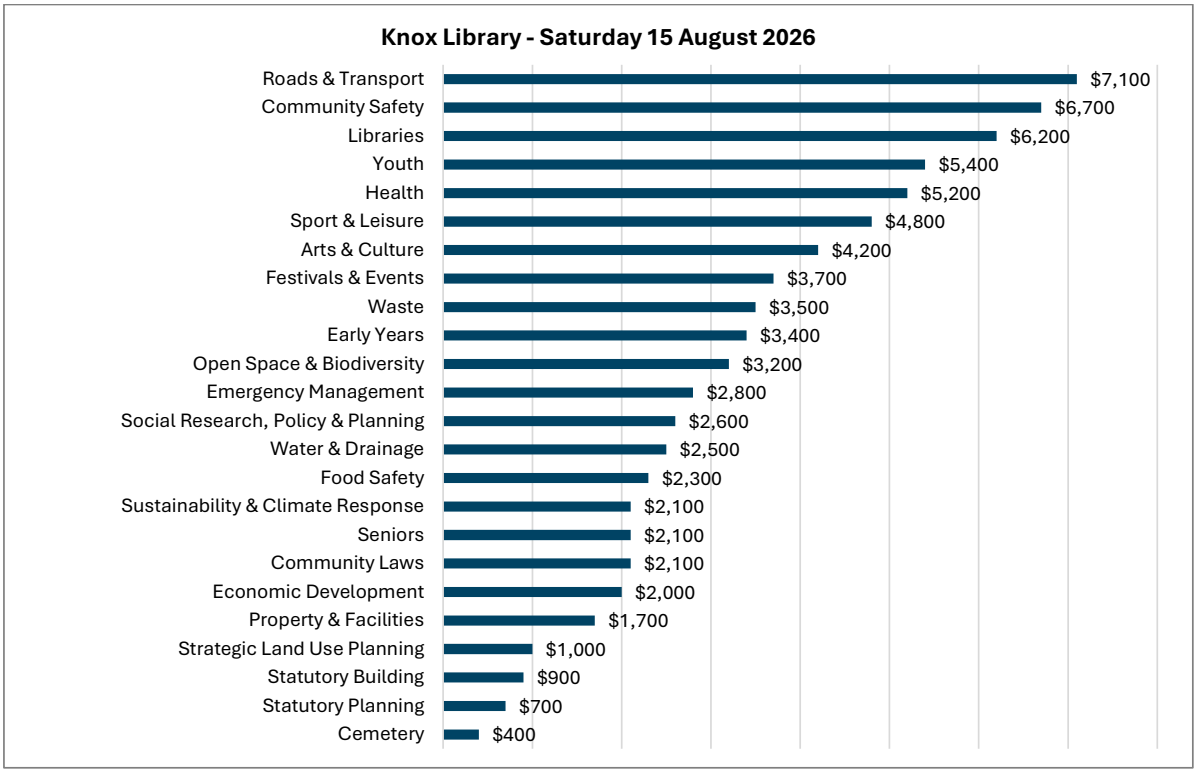
Other Feedback

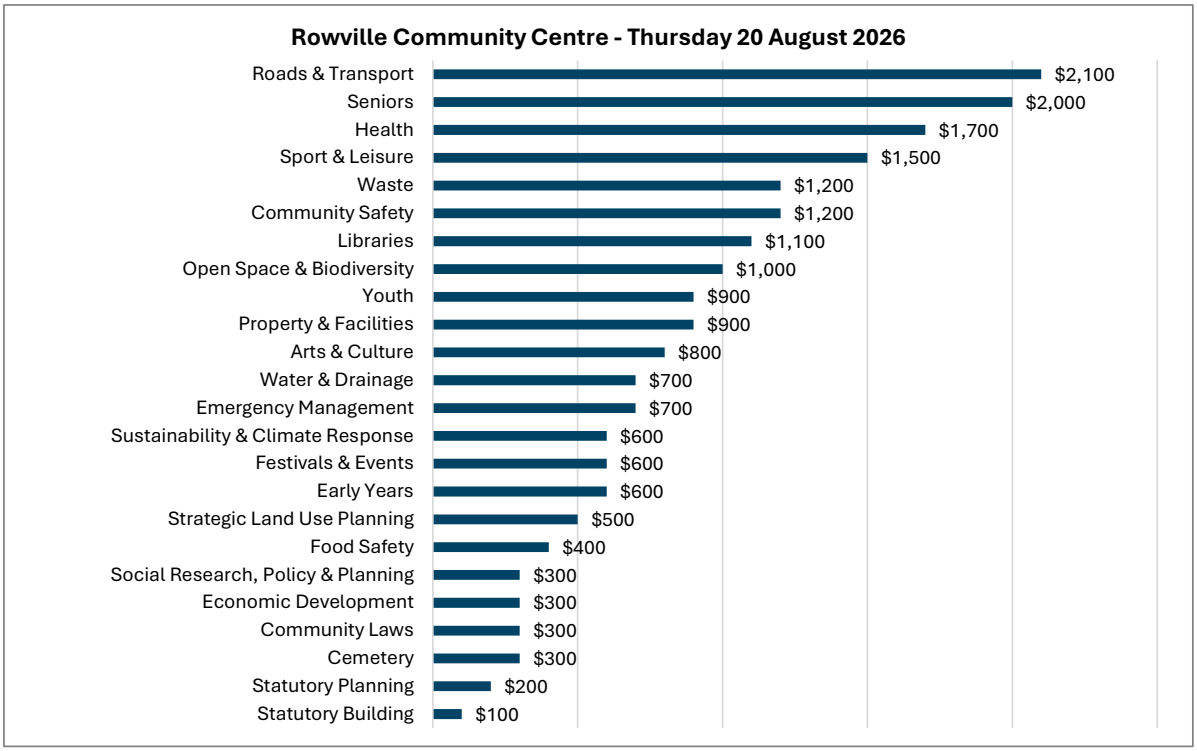
- Knox Annual Budget should provide for more public funded low cost EV Charging Stations.
- Volunteer money that goes to local CFA ultimately ends up in other rural and regional brigades.
- Reduce seeming prioritised spending on minorities. Help the majority of people.
- Stop stupid spending such as unnecessary waste bins and lid changes.
- Recognise the needs of The Basin are very different to Boronia and other areas.
- Your survey requires personal details even for those NOT wanting to present their feedback.

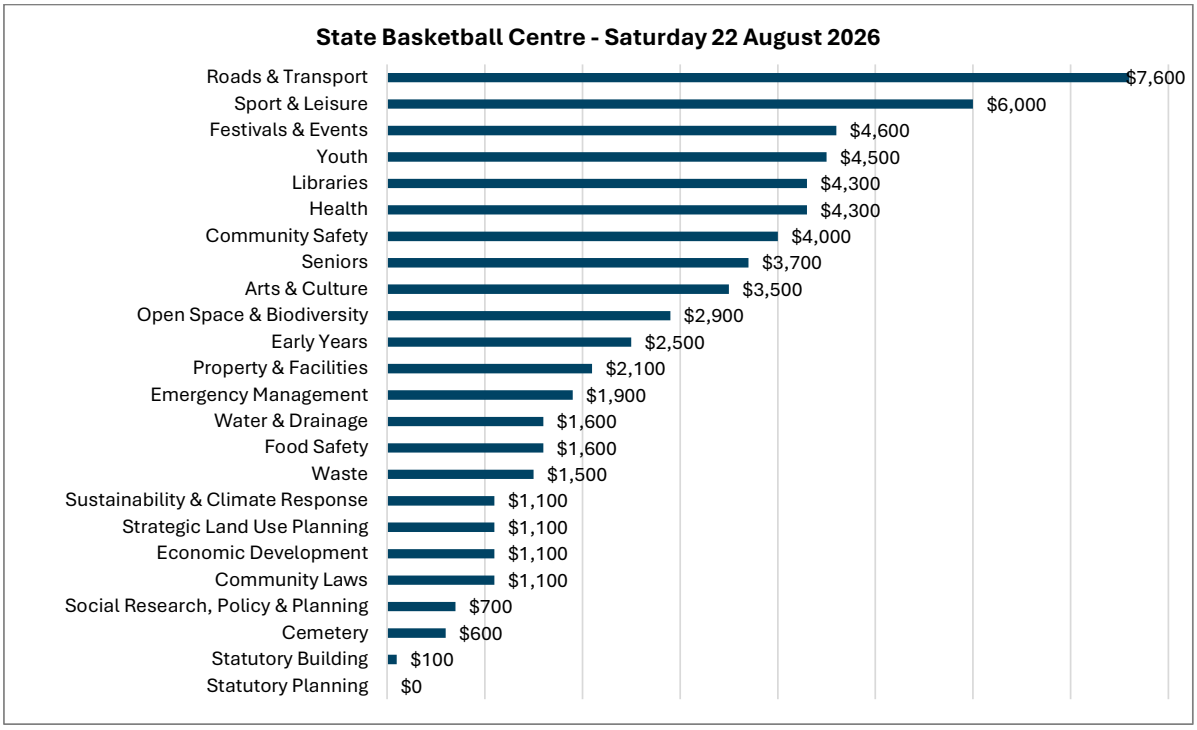
Appendix B - Pop-Up events - Service Budgeting activity by location






Knox Library - Saturday 15 August 2026
Roads & Transport $7,100
Community Safety $6,700
Libraries $6,200
Youth $5,400
Health $5,200
Sport & Leisure $4,800
Arts & Culture $4,200
Festivals & Events $3,700
Waste $3,500
Early Years $3,400
Open Space & Biodiversity $3,200
Emergency Management $2,800
Social Research, Policy & Planning $2,600
Water & Drainage $2,500
Food Safety $2,300
Sustainability & Climate Response $2,100
Seniors $2,100
Community Laws $2,100
Economic Development $2,000
Property & Facilities $1,700
Strategic Land Use Planning $1,000
Statutory Building $900
Statutory Planning $700
Cemetery $400


Rowville Community Centre - Thursday 20 August 2026
Roads & Transport $2,100
Seniors $2,000
Health $1,700
Sport & Leisure $1,500
Waste $1,200
Community Safety $1,200
Libraries $1,100
Open Space & Biodiversity $1,000
Youth $900
Property & Facilities $900
Arts & Culture $800
Water & Drainage $700
Emergency Management $700
Sustainability & Climate Response $600
Festivals & Events $600
Early Years $600
Strategic Land Use Planning $500
Food Safety $400
Social Research, Policy & Planning $300
Economic Development $300
Community Laws $300
Cemetery $300
Statutory Planning $200
Statutory Building $100


State Basketball Centre - Saturday 22 August 2026
Roads & Transport $7,600
Sport & Leisure $6,000
Festivals & Events $4,600
Youth $4,500
Libraries $4,300
Health $4,300
Community Safety $4,000
Seniors $3,700
Arts & Culture $3,500
Open Space & Biodiversity $2,900
Early Years $2,500
Property & Facilities $2,100
Emergency Management $1,900
Water & Drainage $1,600
Food Safety $1,600
Waste $1,500
Sustainability & Climate Response $1,100
Strategic Land Use Planning $1,100
Economic Development $1,100
Community Laws $1,100
Social Research, Policy & Planning $700
Cemetery $600
Statutory Building $100
Statutory Planning $0

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions – Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
1	Steve Masters	Subject: Submission: Proposal for a New Community Walking Trail along Dobson Creek and Dandenong Creek, The Basin I am writing to formally submit a proposal for the construction of a new community walking trail in The Basin. This pathway would follow the outer banks of both Dobson Creek and Dandenong Creek, traversing the land of the former Salvation Army Farm. The use of open spaces for leisure, recreation and social gatherings can enhance community connectedness, increase physical activity and health, and improve general wellbeing. We have a great opportunity to create a walking trail here in The Basin that would be a significant asset to our community. **Proposed Route** The proposed pathway would follow the outer side of both creeks, with entry and exit points at the following locations: · Pavitt Lane and Dobson Lane · Pavitt Lane and Sheffield Road · Sheffield Road and Basin-Olinda Roads · The Basin Triangle Commencing the walk from The Basin Triangle and walking East towards Sheffield Road alongside The Basin-Olinda Road would provide a scenic and accessible route for all. **A Trail of Discovery** There are a number of points of interest along these routes, making this not only a fitness trail but one of discovery. The land itself holds deep historical significance; the Salvation Army purchased 219 acres of land here in 1897, establishing the Bayswater Boys' Home. The trail would allow residents and visitors to connect with this rich local heritage. Furthermore, the existing **Retarding Basin Walk** in the area is already popular with walkers; this new trail would expand on that success and create a more extensive network. **Community Partnership Opportunities** This project offers a wonderful opportunity for local businesses and residents to take pride in our shared spaces. To help fund and enrich the trail, I propose a community sponsorship program that would allow people to contribute by: · Sponsoring a plaque to describe a point of interest. · Donating a bench seat with a family name. · Purchasing a dedication plaque. This model of community partnership would foster a strong sense of belonging and investment in the trail's success. **Alignment with Council Priorities** This proposal aligns with Knox City Council's ongoing commitment to improving community infrastructure. The Council's **2025-26 budget** allocates **$4.8 million to improve footpaths and cycling paths** across the municipality. A new trail along our local creeks would be a prime candidate for this investment. The proposal also complements other community-driven projects in The Basin, including: · **The Basin Triangle Masterplan**, which aims to improve safety, accessibility, and public seating in the heart of our shopping precinct. · The **Mountain Highway footpath** project, which is improving pedestrian access from Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue. By connecting to The Basin Triangle, this trail would integrate with the heart of our shopping precinct, improving pedestrian access and supporting local businesses. **Conclusion**

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		I am confident that this proposed walking trail would be a wonderful asset to The Basin, promoting health, community spirit, and appreciation for our local environment and history. I look forward to your positive consideration of this proposal and would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further.
2	Gale and Deniz Koolamara Community Committee On behalf of the Koolamara residents	Hi Team, I am writing on behalf of the Koolamara community committee and residents of the estate regarding the condition and future improvement of our local park and surrounding facilities. Our community has come together to raise a number of concerns about the safety, accessibility and usability of the park. We understand that the park has had limited upgrades since around 2012, and a number of the facilities and surrounding areas have now deteriorated significantly. We are asking Knox City Council to consider allocating sufficient funding to upgrade and improve the park so that it can better meet the needs of our growing and diverse community. Our key requests include: Upgrade the playground, including replacement of deteriorated equipment and improvements to the slide, swing and rock-climbing wall. Replace and upgrade bench seating, which is currently rough, peeling and deteriorated. Install a concrete or suitable accessible path from Blackwood Park Road through to the Koolamara Boulevard exit, creating a safer and more accessible loop. Install outdoor gym equipment along the path to encourage exercise, health and community engagement. Install a half-size basketball court to provide children and young people with a safe place to play, exercise and socialise. Clean and maintain the lakes, which have become increasingly dirty and slimy over the years. Cut back the overgrown trees and vegetation surrounding the pathways. Undercut and clear vegetation around the paths to improve visibility, accessibility and safety. Upgrade the BBQ and picnic facilities, including consideration of an undercover area. Address concerns regarding snakes and wildlife, particularly where overgrown vegetation and bushy areas are immediately adjacent to frequently used paths and recreational areas. Accessibility and Safety One of our biggest concerns is accessibility. Residents who use walkers, mobility aids or pushers are currently unable to comfortably complete the park loop due to puddles, uneven gravel, sticks and wet conditions. The gravel also sticks to wheels and footwear, making the path difficult and potentially unsafe to navigate. The vegetation surrounding sections of the pathway has also become very dense. Clearing and maintaining these areas would improve visibility and create a safer environment for residents, particularly children, older residents and those walking alone. The playground is another significant concern. Much of the equipment is no longer in a condition that allows it to be used safely or comfortably. The slide is difficult to access due to the lack of suitable stairs, the swing bolts are loose and create a jolting movement when used, the rock wall has deteriorated, and the existing seating is rough and deteriorating.

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		A Community Space for Everyone Koolamara is home to a very diverse community, including young children and families, older residents, people who exercise regularly, joggers, dog walkers and residents who simply want somewhere safe and enjoyable to walk and socialise. Outdoor gym equipment would provide an important opportunity for residents to exercise close to home, while a basketball court would give children and young people a safe place to play, exercise and maintain friendships within the neighbourhood. Providing appropriate recreational facilities and well-maintained public spaces can also encourage positive community engagement and give young people alternatives activities instead of riding pit bikes and attracting children who are misbehaving through the estate The park and lakes were a significant selling point of the Koolamara estate. However, after many years of limited upgrades, the area is no longer as attractive or functional as it once was. The vegetation has grown substantially, and the condition of the lakes and facilities has declined. We appreciate that Council has many competing priorities and understand that improvements need to be considered within available budgets. However, residents have been paying council rates for many years and would greatly appreciate seeing investment returned into our local community. We have also seen other parks and recreational spaces in surrounding areas receive upgrades and the installation of improved facilities. We believe Koolamara deserves similar consideration. This is our community and, for many of us, our forever home. We would love to see the park revitalised into a safe, accessible and welcoming space that residents of all ages can enjoy for many years to come. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these concerns further and would welcome information about whether Council can undertake an assessment of the park, including its playground equipment, pathways, vegetation, lakes and recreational facilities. Thank you for taking the time to consider the concerns and suggestions of the Koolamara community. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully working together with Council to make meaningful improvements to our local park. Kind regards, Koolamara Community Committee On behalf of the Koolamara residents Gale and Deniz
3	Caroline Stiglec	**Commercial zoning in Rowville for local shopping strips** This submission is to propose changes to zoning in Rowville to allow for the development of more commercial property infrastructure, specifically for use as cafés, take-away shops and similar small businesses. Rowville is a geographically large suburb but only has three shopping areas within it (Wellington Village, Stud Park and Rowville Lakes). Many Rowville residents live too far from these shopping areas to walk to the shops or to visit a café or restaurant. By rezoning small pockets of Rowville, potentially using parts of existing parks and reserves, commercial property infrastructure could be built to allow for cafés and shops to

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		open in areas that are in walking distance to residents who currently live too far from shopping areas to access them on foot. This would greatly improve Rowville's walkability, vibrancy and community-focus, and would also increase property values in the area, leading to increased rate revenue. These improvements would be able to achieved with no or minimal cost to Knox Council as, following the zoning changes, the building of the infrastructure and operation of the businesses would be undertaken by private investors or businesses. It may be helpful to incentivize the desired types of businesses to open in these locations to avoid a situation where businesses that do not improve the area, or actively detract from the area, open in these locations, as has happened with the small number of former milk bars located around Rowville that have become a religious centre and a vape shop.

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
4	Karin Orpen OAM Knox Historical Society	 Knox Historical Society Inc. *Preserving our past for future generations* ABN: 20 622 354 537 Museum: 3 Olivebank Road, Ferntree Gully Correspondence: PO Box 8124, Ferntree Gully, Vic, 3156 Message service: 03 9758 6722 E-mail: khs@relics.com August 22nd, 2026 Knox City Council **2027-28 Budget Submission from Knox Historical Society for funding for a Visitor & Resource Centre** • In 2011 Knox Council demolished a cream brick home at 1 Olivebank Road, as "Stage 1 of the Ambleside Masterplan"; • A "temporary" windowless shipping container was put on site shortly after; • A "temporary" former VicRoads hut was also deposited on site in the ensuing years; • Documents are stored in a compactus in the "temporary" shipping container; • It is a 55 metre trek pulling a trolley uphill in all weather conditions to transport bound documents to the museum for the public to view; • Documents must be kept in a temperature-controlled environment in accordance with our CPF funding and AmAGA best practices; • The door to the "temporary" windowless shipping container must be left open for the safety of our volunteers; • Subsequently the temperature is compromised in summer and winter while our utility costs soar. Our situation is dire and our volunteers have to endure conditions not asked of other community groups in Knox. Knox Historical Society is the only organisation in Knox preserving and promoting local Knox history. Our services include but are not limited to: - Research for members of the public, government organisations including Department of Education for evidential documentation and photos for their legal enquiries, and SOCIT for sexual abuse investigations; - Volunteers ensuring the museum and historic outbuildings are open for members of the public; - Hosting Community groups, service clubs and scouts troops for tours of the museum and grounds; - School group visits for Year 1 and 2 "then and now" programs; 1

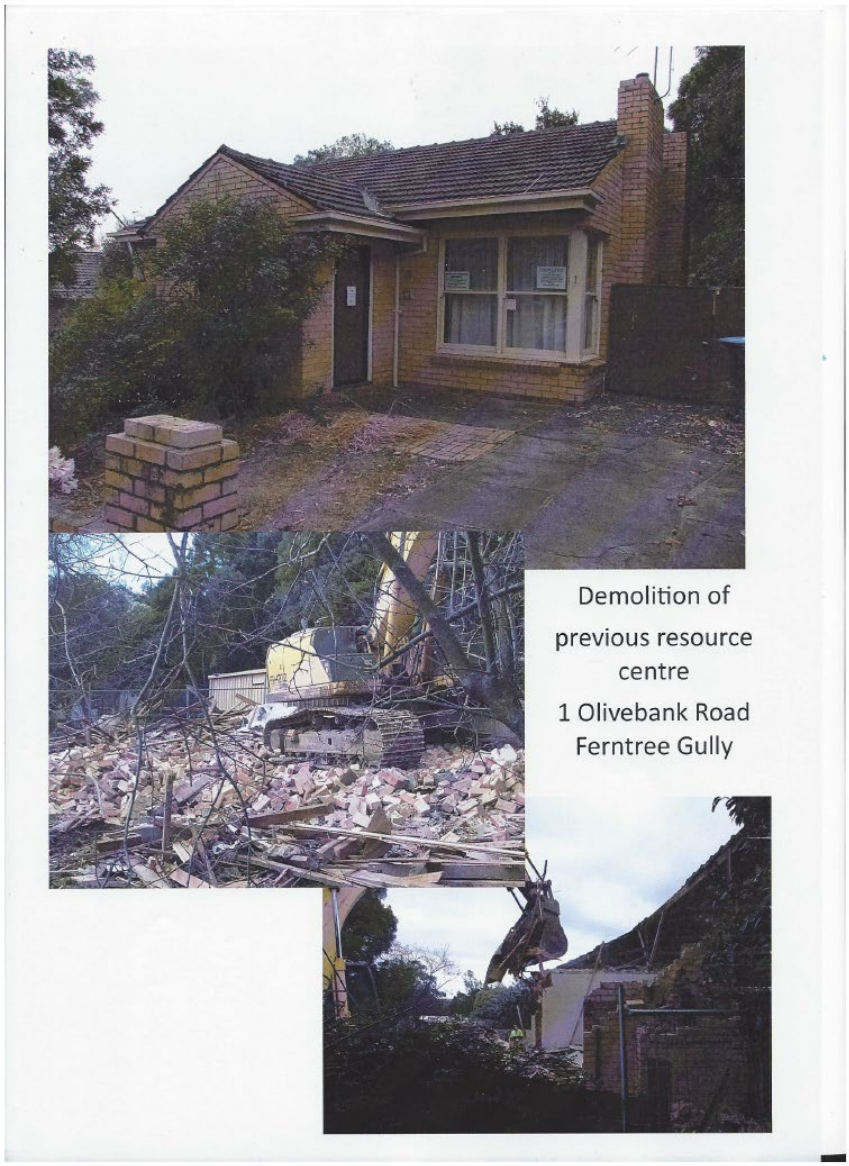
Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		- History 'n Mystery Tours of the Ferntree Gully cemetery; - Visiting aged care and retirement homes and community groups for historical presentations - Providing data and images for Knox Council year round for their various projects such as the image of Scoresby primary pupils for the pubic toilet renewal recently When our schools visit, (60-80 students plus parents and teachers per sitting) there is no wet weather provision and no where they can sit and eat lunch if needed between sessions. A new Visitor & Resource Centre would address that providing a welcoming space and appropriate toilet facilities. We will have had approx. 270 students in the past couple of months.     Primary School and Joey Scout visits 2

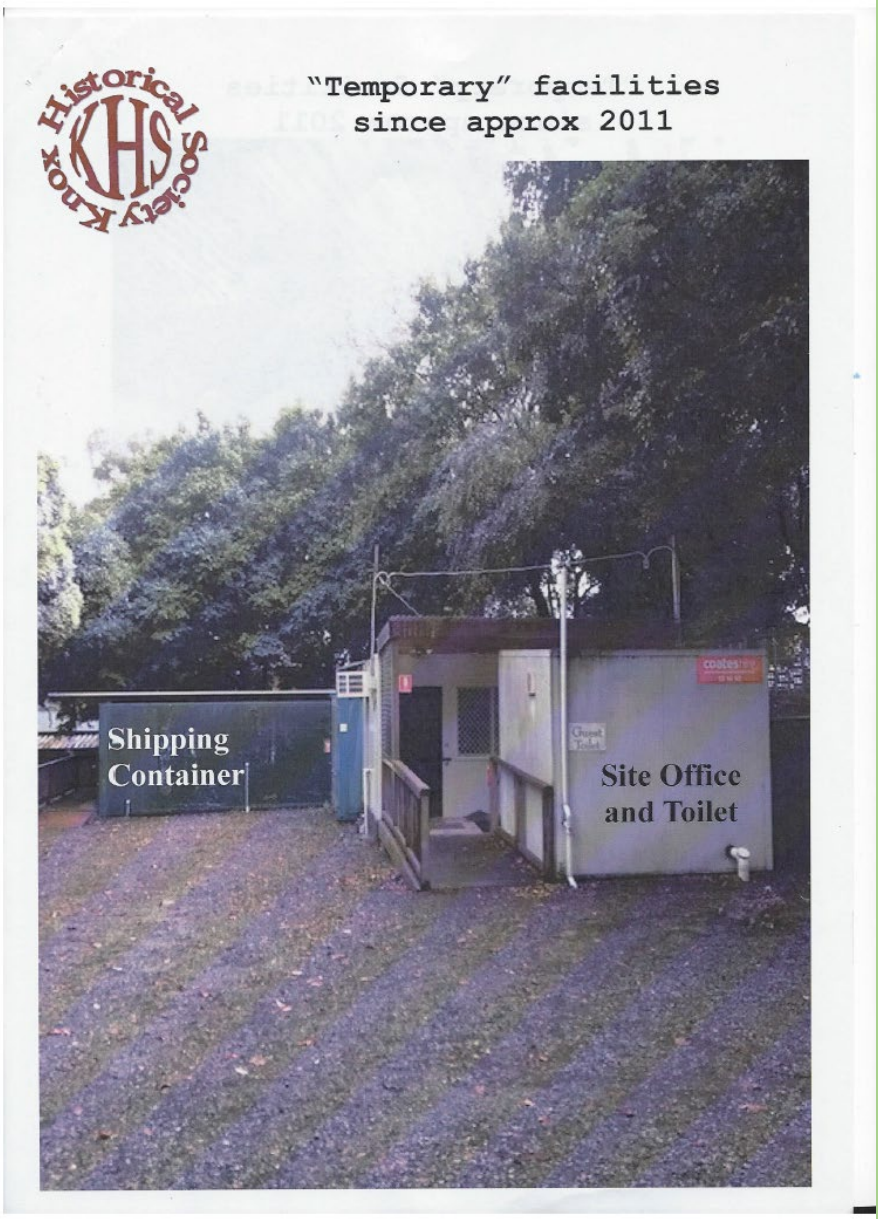
Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		We are at the point where we are now turning away volunteers as we simply do not have the appropriate space for them. We envisage that a new Visitor and Resource Centre will be an inspiring community space that can be used and enjoyed by residents from Knox and beyond. And importantly provide appropriate spaces for our amazing volunteers, which in turn will enable more volunteers to be engaged and the Society to develop new activities and expanded programs, events and opening hours. ➢ **We have made budget submissions previously** ➢ **15 years is long enough for a valued broad-based community resource group in Knox to have to operate in these conditions** ➢ **The buildings plans have been developed** ➢ **The planning permit was issued in December 2025** ➢ **The new estimated cost to deliver the project is $3M** ➢ **We acknowledge Council has put the project on its advocacy program in the lead up to the State election, but that is no guarantee** ➢ **We are advised that Council has it on its "forward program" but again, that is no guarantee when budget deliberations commence in 2027, 2028, 2029 etc** ➢ **We presented to the former council who were advised of our situation** ➢ **We offered to present to the current council and were advised that it was not necessary** ➢ **We will not be speaking to our budget request – 2 minutes does not do our volunteers or our situation justice.** ➢ **We request Knox Council allocated full funding in the 2027 budget** ➢ **We wish you all the best in your deliberations and we hope that you take the time to have a look at our attachments.** Yours sincerely, Knox Historical Society 3

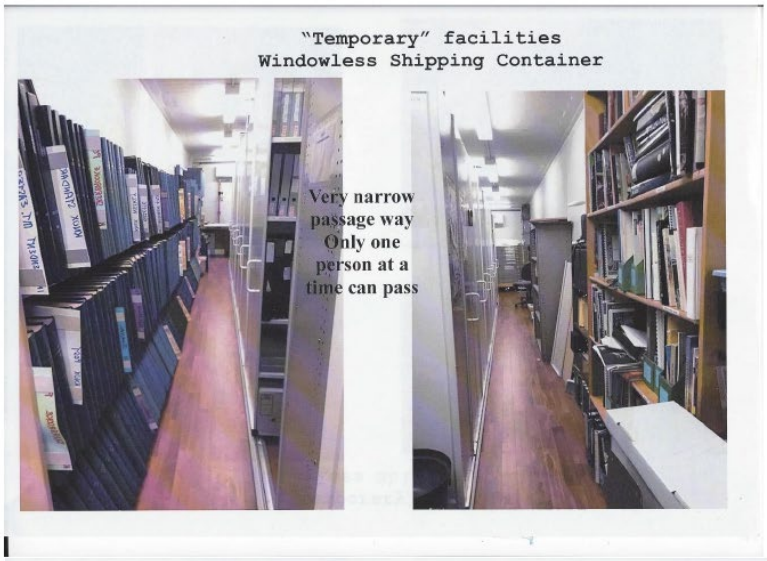
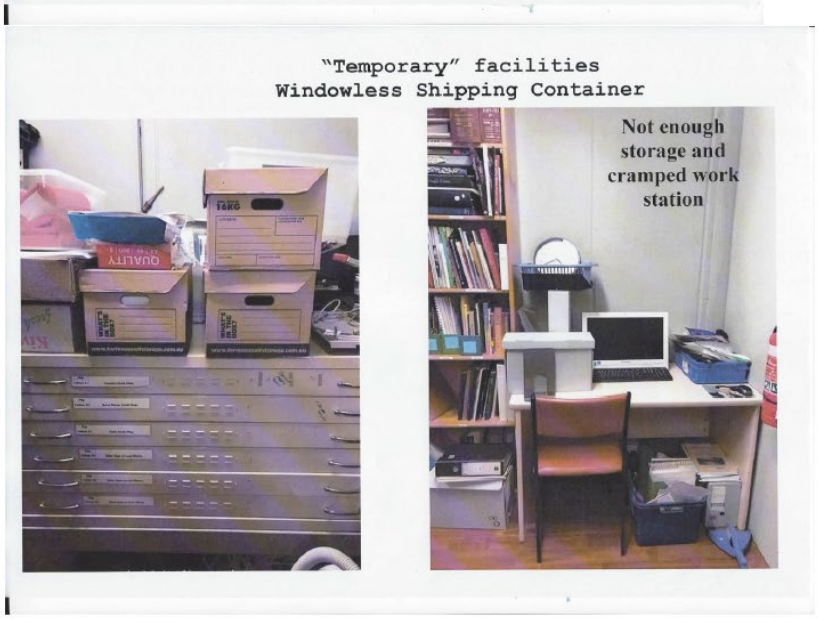
Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		 4

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

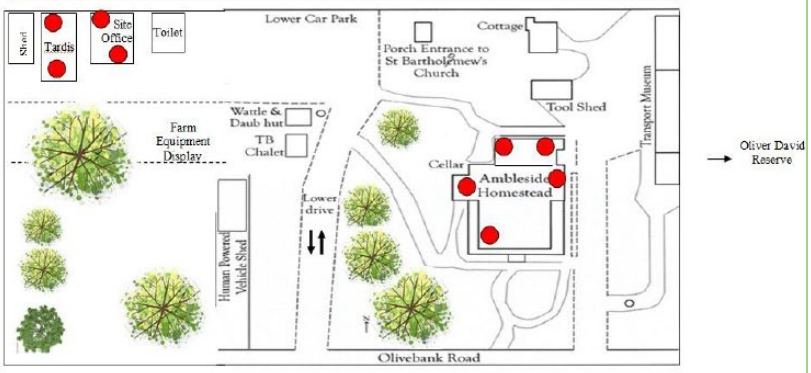
Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

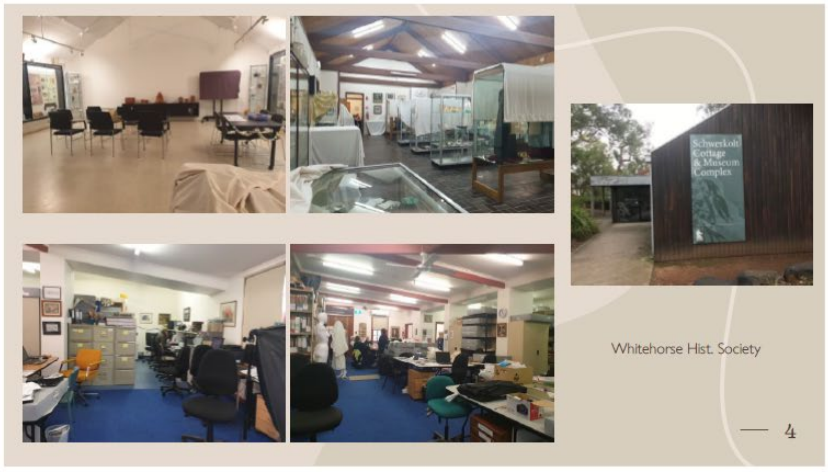
Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
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Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		Red dots = current work stations squeezed in all over the site. **Documents must be trekked 55 metres uphill from the Tardis (windowless shipping container) to the Museum in all weather**



Whitehorse Council see the value in promoting their local history. This facility built a few years ago.



7

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		Why not.....??? Ambleside Homestead & Museum Complex **Our School Program brochure**  **Visit Ambleside Park Homestead and Museum in Ferntree Gully** **Are you looking for a school excursion that explores local history?** Ambleside is a historical homestead built in 1889. The house and museum give a unique look into the lifestyle of the early 20th century pioneers of Knox within 2-acres of secured gardens. This program is ideal for the primary curriculum in comparing the 'Then and Now' and caters for groups up to 60 school students. Any more than this we suggest that you stagger your visit over two days. During our School Tours, the students are divided into smaller groups and rotate through each station attended by our volunteers who hold current WWC cards. The stations visited are: • Homestead • School Room • Cellar and Laundry • Cottage • Tool Shed • Transport Museum • Garage • Old time games. Whether learning to write with dipped pen and ink, using the mangle in the laundry, sifting flour in the settler's cottage or trying out the horse-drawn carriage, students are always engaged and eager to participate. Each station is between 10 - 15 minutes so please allow about two hours for the visit which includes a 20-minute BYO snack and toilet break. The cost of our interactive tour is $10.00 per student, with no charge for accompanying Teachers, Carers and Helpers. For more information please leave a message with your contact number and our Events Coordinator will call you back as the Museum is only open on Thursdays and Fridays. Events Coordinator Email kha@telus.com

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

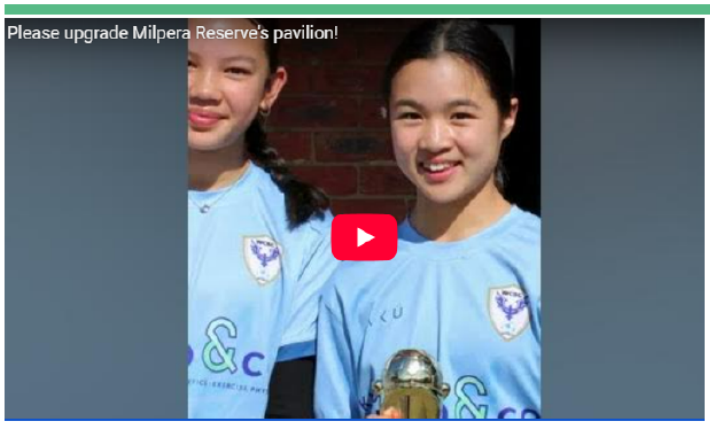
Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
5	Andrew Teh Waverley City Soccer Club	**Andrew Teh** President, Waverley City Soccer Club waverleycitysc@gmail.com 23 August 2026 **Bruce Dobson** Chief Executive Officer 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South VIC 3152 Dear Mr Dobson I write to you as the President of the Waverley City Soccer Club, the winter tenant at Milpera Reserve, to advocate for urgent upgrades and redevelopment of the Milpera Reserve pavilion in line with the *Knox Pavilion Strategy* (**Strategy**). Our submission for the last budget was unfortunately unsuccessful, but we believe there will be a strong case to justify funding towards a Milpera Reserve upgrade in the 2027-2028 budget. **Milpera Reserve Pavilion: A Critical Community Asset Needing Renewal** The pavilion at Milpera Reserve is a vital hub for our club and the broader Knox community. However, as highlighted in the Strategy, many pavilions across Knox, including Milpera Reserve, were constructed decades ago and now fall well short of meeting the needs of modern sport, community expectations, and current building standards. The Strategy's assessment specifically identifies Milpera Reserve Pavilion as requiring a "*Close the Gap*" investment scenario, meaning it is unfit for purpose and needs substantial improvement to meet current demand and service levels. **Our Club's Growing Needs** Waverley City Soccer Club currently fields 5 senior men's teams, 1 senior women's team, and 4 junior mixed teams (under 11s, 12s, 13s and 14s) in various divisions within the Victorian Churches Football Association. Our club has a culturally diverse and growing membership, with an urgent need for facilities that are inclusive, accessible, and fit for purpose. **The Challenges Faced by Women and Girls at Our Club**

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		Women and girls at our club face significant barriers due to the inadequacy of the shared pavilion facilities at Milpera Reserve: • Lack of Female-Friendly Spaces and Privacy: The current pavilion was not designed for the needs of female players. There are no dedicated female-friendly change rooms or amenities, meaning women and girls are frequently forced to share limited spaces with male teams or resort to changing in cars or public toilets for privacy and comfort. This lack of appropriate facilities is a well-documented barrier to female participation and retention in sport. Indeed, the club unfortunately lost our u14 girls team in 2026, which was disbanded this season in part due to these issues. Some of these girls joined other clubs, but the majority are no longer playing soccer. • Scheduling Conflicts and Unequal Access: With five senior men's teams, one senior women's team and four junior mixed teams all sharing the same space, female teams often wait for male teams to vacate the change rooms. This not only causes logistical delays but also reinforces a sense of inequity, as women and girls are left feeling like an afterthought within their own club. • Inadequate Amenities and Safety Concerns: Shared, outdated facilities often lack basic features such as private showers, sanitary bins, and secure, clean toilets-essentials for female comfort and dignity. The absence of these amenities can make participation stressful and discouraging, especially for girls navigating adolescence. Safety is also a concern, with inadequate lighting and access contributing to discomfort, particularly after evening training sessions. • Impact on Participation, Retention, and Club Culture: The lack of appropriate infrastructure sends a strong message about who is valued and welcome in community sport. When women and girls are forced to make do with substandard facilities, it undermines efforts to grow female participation and can lead to higher dropout rates, especially among teenage girls. Addressing these issues through targeted upgrades is critical for ensuring equal access, boosting participation, and building a truly inclusive club and community. **A Video Message from a Womens Player** Chelsea Vrakatselis, a Committee Member and womens team player created the below video in 2025:

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**



Council Funding and Progress to Date

On 28 June 2021, Councillors passed the 2021-2022 budget which allocated $20,000 for design work on the Milpera Reserve pavilion refurbishment:

4.5.2 Current Budget

Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	Asset Expenditure Types: New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Summary of Funding Sources: Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property									
Buildings	**15,428**	**185**	**5,532**	**4,092**	**5,619**	**3,000**	**160**	**8,084**	**4,184**
Knox Athletics Track - New Shade Structure	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Schultz Reserve - New Shade Structure	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	50	0
Modular Building Program (Modern Construction System) (Scoping Only)	35	35	0	0	0	0	0	35	0
Replacements of components for all Council owned buildings based on Building Asset Management Systems	5,532	0	5,532	0	0	0	0	5,532	0
Stamford Park Development	1,230	0	0	1,230	0	0	0	1,230	0
Facility Upgrades as per Buildings Asset Management Plan	500	0	0	500		0	0	0	500
Boronia Precinct Planning (Design Only)	361	0	0	361	0	0	0	361	0
Community Toilet Replacement Program	309	0	0	309	0	0	0	0	309
Family & Children Buildings and Facilities Upgrades	278	0	0	278	0	0	0	88	190
Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Facility Management (Scoping Only)	250	0	0	250	0	0	0	0	250
Upgrades to Early Years Facilities	200	0	0	200	0	0	0	0	200
Knox Leisureworks - Major Redevelopment (Scoping Only)	155	0	0	155	0	0	0	0	155
Millers Homestead Upgrade	150	0	0	150	0	0	0	0	150
Early Years Facility Emergency Warning System	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Solar panels in Community Facilities	100	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Energy Retrofits in Community Buildings	80	0	0	80	0	0	0	0	80
Schultz Reserve - Pavilion Refurbishment	75	0	0	75	0	0	0	0	75
Installation of Electronic Entry System	60	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	60
Updates all Kindergarten Signage	60	0	0	60	0	0	0	0	60
Council Kindergartens Lockers Installation	50	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50
Boronia Progress Hall Upgrade	40	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	40
Kitchen Retrofitting Program at sports pavilions	25	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	25
Milpera Reserve - Pavilion Refurbishment (Design Only)	20	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	20

Between 25 October 2021 to 11 July 2022, Council regularly reported at Strategic Planning Committee meetings that the refurbishment works would "*align with the new modular project*":

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**

Knox City Council Project Status Report 27-Apr-2022

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1469	Milpera Reserve, Wantirna - Existing Pavilion Refurbishment	$20,000
Collier	Works will align with the new modular project.	

On 26 June 2023, Councillors passed the 2023-2024 budget which allocated $110,000 for pavilion refurbishment work:

4.5.2 2023-24 Capital Budget

		Asset Expenditure Types				Summary of Funding Sources			
Capital Works Area	Project Cost $'000	New $'000	Renewal $'000	Upgrade $'000	Expans'n $'000	Grants $'000	Contrib. $'000	Council Cash* $'000	Borrow-ings $'000
Property Buildings	**10,503**	**2,050**	**4,732**	**2,321**	**1,400**	**0**	**0**	**6,033**	**4,470**
Park Ridge Reserve Pavilion	2,000	2,000	0	0	0				
Gilmour Park - Shade Shelter	50	50	0	0	0				
Replacements of components for all Council owned buildings based on Building Asset Management Systems	4,732	0	4,732	0	0				
Carrington Park - Squash Facility	623	0	0	623	0				
Community Toilet Replacement Program	250	0	0	250	0				
Rowville Recreation Reserve - DDA and Baby Change Facilities Upgrade (Design)	200	0	0	200	0				
Solar panels in Community Facilities	195	0	0	195	0				
Tormore Reserve - Facility Redevelopment (this will only be funded if State/Federal funding is confirmed)	160	0	0	160	0				
Energy Retrofits in Community Buildings	150	0	0	150	0				
Milpera Reserve - Pavilion Refurbishment	110	0	0	110	0				

Between 11 September 2023 to 12 February 2024, Council regularly reported at Strategic Planning Committee meetings and Council meetings that the "*scope and design has not commenced*":

Knox City Council Project Status Report 29-Jan-2024

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1588	Milpera Reserve Pavilion - Design	$110,000
Collier	Scope and design has not commenced.	

Despite these allocations, our club has not yet seen any tangible progress or action towards refurbishment or redevelopment.

Comparison with Other Pavilions

Milpera Reserve is one of 13 pavilions assessed as needing a "*Close the Gap*" investment scenario. Several pavilions assessed as "*Close the Gap*" and "*Radical Transformation*" have already received significant funding for renewal or redevelopment, including Tormore Reserve Pavilion ($5.5 million), Fairpark Reserve Pavilion ($4.4 million) and Park Ridge Reserve Pavilion ($3.6 million).

Not to mention, some pavilions assessed as "*Business as Usual*" have already received significant funding for renewal or redevelopment, including Carrington Park Pavilion ($3.5 million) and Wally Tew Reserve Pavilion ($182,004).

Attachment 2: Public Submissions Budget 2027-2028

Public Submissions		
No.	**Name**	**Submission**
		These projects are progressing towards modern, compliant facilities, while Milpera Reserve continues to operate with outdated infrastructure. This disparity highlights the need for equitable investment in our pavilion. Our Request We respectfully request that a portion of the budget allocation be utilised in the next financial year on the designing upgrades for the Milpera Reserve pavilion specifically, like was allocated in previous budgets (see above). We are eager to work in partnership with Council to deliver a facility that meets the needs of our rapidly growing club and the wider community. We are keen to highlight the key role that a new facility may play in helping us retain girls and women in sport. Thank you for your ongoing support of grassroots sport and community infrastructure. We look forward to securing the future of Milpera Reserve pavilion. Sincerely **Andrew Teh** President, Waverley City Soccer Club waverleycitysc@gmail.com CC: Director Infrastructure – Grant Thorne Director Connected Communities – Judy Chalkley
6	Astrid Schmidt	We live on Cornish Rd with two teenage boys. It's close to impossible to cross Wellington road on food. The visibility to both sides of the road is really bad and the cars are driving way too fast. We would love to cross the road safely. Also, the intersection Kellets Rd/Wellington Rd is super dangerous as well. We have an accident there nearly every week. Please consider changing the traffic conditions for the safety of everyone.
7	Devinka Wadumestri	Fix and reopen the outdoor pool at Knox Leisureworks
8	Maria Ulas	Cornish Rd upgraded, has not been upgraded for 100 years and needs to be safer and allow traffic to park safely into the park

8.3 Community engagement for Knox Central - future arts, culture and community services

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Manager City Projects, Nicola Ward
Manager: Manager City Projects, Nicola Ward
Executive: Director, City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

SUMMARY
The 'Heart of Knox' project is at an important point where community and stakeholder engagement will help inform future Council decisions on arts and cultural services and activities and community services that a civic and cultural precinct could offer. The engagement is part of an arts and cultural needs analysis and community services needs analysis, which have both commenced. Consultants have been engaged to undertake the arts and cultural analysis, including targeted stakeholder engagement.

The community engagement has been designed using the information gathered at the Multi-Advisory Committee meeting in July.

This report seeks the Council's approval to commence community engagement for four weeks from Wednesday 4 November to Tuesday 1 December 2026.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:

1. Approves the commencement of community engagement on arts and culture participation and interests; and community services needs;
2. Notes that key stakeholders will also be engaged as part of the arts and cultural needs analysis and community services needs analysis; and
3. Notes that the results of the engagement and analyses will be reported to Council in 2027 to inform future Council decisions on the Knox Central 'Heart of Knox' civic and community precinct.

1. DISCUSSION

Background to the 'Heart of Knox' project.
Knox Central is the municipality's largest activity centre and serves a broad community in Knox and across the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Successive councils have made key decisions to support the development of Knox Central as a premier destination in the outer east.

Council first established the strategic direction for an arts, cultural and civic precinct in the Knox Central Activity Centre around 20 years ago through early planning documents. The current strategic plan is the 2017 Knox Central Structure Plan (Amendment C149), which sets the vision, objectives and actions for the Knox Central Activity Centre.

The Knox Central Program is the way the 'Heart of Knox' project is being planned and developed. Objective 1 of the Structure Plan guides the Knox Central Program.

Objective 1: To enhance Knox Central's role as the civic and public heart of the municipality where communities connect and congregate.

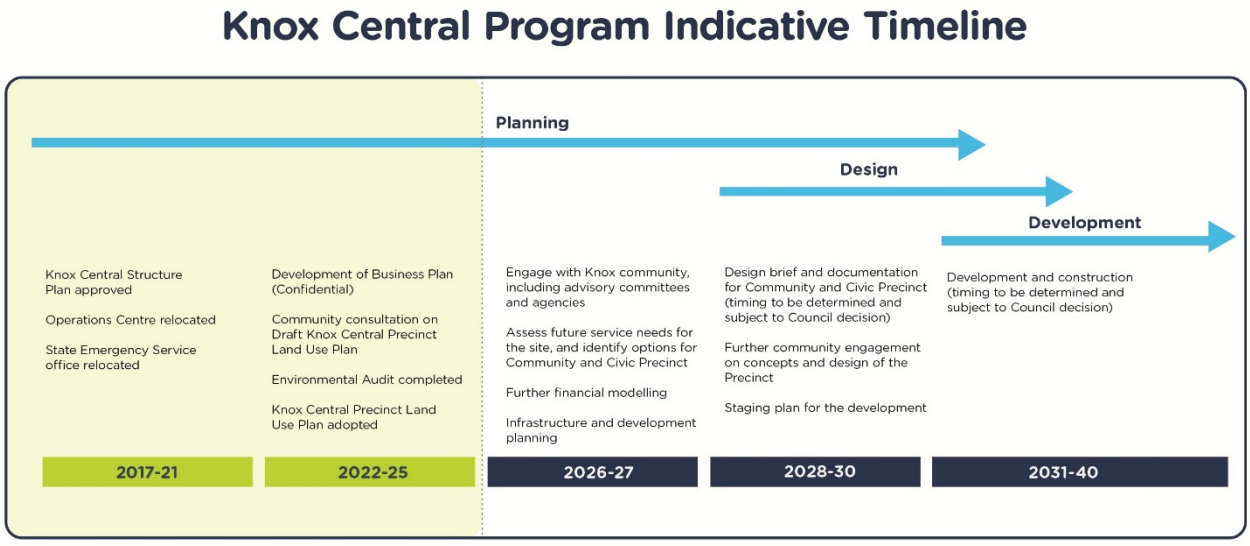
- Continue investigations into the development of appropriate arts and cultural facilities in Knox, within the context of the South/Eastern region.
- Following scoping and master planning, undertake the design process for the future civic buildings.

The Program has progressed under evolving resolutions of the Council that help to prioritise allocation of staff time and budget. The most recent resolution was July 2025 when Council resolved that it:

1. Adopts a renewed 'working position' to enable Council's vision for the Heart of Knox project to continue to be developed, as follows:
   a. the location of a future civic/community/cultural precinct should be generally located within the Central Junction and/or Burwood Highway sub-precincts as shown in the adopted Central Precinct Land Use Plan (August 2024);
   b. the future services and facilities that Council may seek to deliver in the civic/community/cultural precinct are to be assessed;
   c. the infrastructure required for the site to be developed is to be assessed; and
   d. options for development of the balance of the site are to be assessed.
2. Notes that development, planning and legal advisory services will be procured to support these assessments, and to support future Council decisions.
3. Resolve to include these resolutions within the public minutes.

Indicative high-level Program and timing

The figure below shows recent milestones (shaded) that keep the Program moving in line with the direction set in the 2017 Structure Plan and earlier Council decisions. It also indicates milestones that will be the subject of future council decisions. Over many years successive Knox councils have made key decisions, and each council □built □ decisions made by previous councils. Knox councils continue to implement the long-term vision for the Knox Central Activity Centre. Each council is helping to create a legacy that will benefit many future generations of Knox residents.



Upcoming community engagement
To implement 1b of the Council's July 2025 resolution, community engagement is planned for four weeks from Wednesday 4 November to Tuesday 1 December 2026 and in 2027.

The engagement is proposed in two parts. Phase 1 is the upcoming engagement to obtain data from the community on their interest and participation in arts and cultural activities, and on community services that they may wish to access in the future Knox Central civic/cultural and community precinct. Phase 2 is proposed for 2027 and will be confirmed when Phase 1 results have been analysed.

Arts and Culture analysis
The focus of earlier councils was a civic precinct that could include a traditional performing arts theatre with proscenium stage. The Knox Community Arts Centre is an example of that style of theatre, where audiences sit and look at the performance.

Since then, Knox has undergone population and demographic change. Research by council officers indicate the arts and cultural landscape in Knox and the region has evolved. In recent years two new and large proscenium stage facilities have been built in the outer eastern region - Bunjil Place in Casey, and The Round in Whitehorse. Knox residents also have good access to Karralyka (Maroondah), Burrinja (Yarra Ranges) and The Drum Theatre (Dandenong).

Many contemporary forms of arts and cultural expression have very different space demands (e.g. digital projection; installation and sculpture; immersive 3D sound and visual experiences; small-scale, intimate music/comedy/dance; and performances that encourage audience involvement etc). There is a movement in Victoria and elsewhere towards flexible facilities that can support diverse arts and cultural experiences in the one place (e.g. black box theatre space, music rooms, function rooms, gallery spaces and makers places etc.). It is timely to better understand what the arts community, audiences, makers and the community generally are involved in and attend, their future needs, and any barriers that exist to community participation in arts and cultural activities in Knox. This is the purpose of the community engagement.

Experienced consultants have been appointed to undertake an arts and cultural analysis including targeted engagement with key stakeholders in the cultural sector in Knox. Data from the community engagement, key stakeholder engagement and other sources will underpin the consultant work. The first stage of the analysis is assessing demographic data, documenting and mapping arts and cultural facilities in the region including non-Council venues, studios, galleries and school facilities, and engagement with the arts and cultural sector including audiences. Phase 1 of community engagement is aligned with the targeted engagement and analysis the consultants will undertake. Council will have the opportunity to review the information after it is completed and guide next steps.

Community Services analysis
In parallel, council officers are jointly undertaking analysis of future community service needs. This analysis will assess community service demands of the population in the Knox Central area for the next 20 years and beyond. It will account for demographic change, and the projected population increase in the Activity Centre from future residential development in the Activity Centre. The assessment will enable officers to plan community spaces and service delivery in the Knox Central precinct site. The analysis has objectives to:

- Establish an evidence-based understanding of community service needs and/or uses that:
  a) must be delivered on site;
  b) could be delivered on site but could also be delivered elsewhere; and
  c) are currently delivered on site but should be delivered elsewhere rather than on the site.
- Understand demand for non-Council delivered services that could have a presence in the Knox Central Precinct, for example, service providers that might seek to access community and meeting spaces to run appointments on particular days (e.g. Eastern Community Legal Centre, financial counselling, homelessness referral services, Seniors Rights, family violence support).
- Identify and articulate gaps in existing community facilities and present options for how the gaps and needs might be addressed through the development of the Knox Central Precinct, (e.g. community hall, community kitchen, multi-purpose function room/s).
- Understand the requirements (locational, space etc.) for services and facilities in scope that need to be provided on site.

The phase 1 community engagement will explore council and non-council services the community might wish to access from Knox Central. Phase 2 engagement in 2027 will likely explore the results with community sector representatives and service providers that support key cohorts across community health, seniors, youth and disability. The timing and form of the phase 2 engagement will be worked through and discussed with the council following the results of the phase 1 community engagement.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The 'Heart of Knox' project was one of five topics discussed at the Multi-Advisory committee meeting in July. The Project team used the opportunity to test two engagement questions:

- What would attract you to come to the Knox Central Precinct?
- What service and activities would you want to access in the Knox Central Precinct?

Participants' feedback indicated a strong desire for the Knox Central Precinct to become an inclusive, lively and well-connected community heart. Participants consistently called for spaces that support arts and cultural activities and social connection. They also expressed strong interest in safe and accessible community spaces, good transport connections, affordable and diverse housing, local food and business opportunities, and health and wellbeing services.

The second set of questions sought information to inform the engagement methodology:

- When planning community engagement, who is it important to hear from?
- Is there anything else we need to consider when planning for engagement?

The feedback was used to design the community and stakeholder engagement and develop the community engagement plan for phase 1 engagement.

The key objectives of phase 1 engagement are to:

- Understand participation in arts and cultural activities and any barriers; and understand community needs and preferences for arts and cultural services, activities and events to operate from the Knox Central Precinct.
- Understand future community services needs and preferences for future community services to operate from the Knox Central Precinct.

The community engagement will include a survey form on Knox Have Your Say and pop ups. Extra effort is being made to capture feedback from diverse communities including culturally and linguistically diverse people, young people, seniors and people with disability.
There is ongoing work to build deeper engagement over time with First Nations people to celebrate Country and First Nations culture on the site. Attachment 1 is a summary of the community engagement plan.

Stakeholder engagement is targeted. For arts and culture, the consultants have proposed an engagement approach that covers communities and audiences, artists and makers, schools and community organisations, programmers, operators and potential partners; along with adjacent councils, peak bodies, and Council's Advisory Committees in collaboration with the Project team.

Stakeholder engagement to test the data and analysis on community services needs will be undertaken in 2027.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
The community consultation will include targeted engagement with cohorts including people with a disability, seniors, members of the CALD community and young people.

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 impacts at this stage of planning for the Knox Central Precinct.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
The Arts and Culture Needs technical analysis is being funded through the City Projects Operational budget. Expenses associated with community and stakeholder engagement will also be met through the operating budget.

7. RISKS
Risks have been assessed through the community engagement plan template.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources
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.

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

Planning our future city
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.

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 - Summary of Engagement Plan [**8.3.1** - 4 pages]

knox

Knox City Council

Summary of engagement approach

Knox Central – arts, culture and community services engagement

Project overview

The engagement is being undertaken to source information from the community on participation in arts and cultural activities, and arts, culture and community services they would like to access at Knox Central. It also is seeking to understand barriers to participation.

Engagement objectives

- Understand community barriers to participation in arts and culture activities.
- Understand community barriers to participation in community services.
- Understand community needs and preferences for future community services to operate from the Central Precinct.
- Understand community needs and preferences for arts and cultural services, activities and events to operate from the Central Precinct.
- Identify opportunities to make the Central Precinct inclusive and accessible.
- Capture feedback from diverse communities including culturally and linguistically diverse people, young people, seniors and people with disability.
- Identify opportunities to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, their connection to Country and celebrate First Nations culture in the Central Precinct.

What the community can influence

The community will be able to provide feedback on:

- Type and function of community services operating from Central Precinct
- Community facilities (e.g. multipurpose rooms for rent) at the Central Precinct
- Arts and cultural services and activities at the Central Precinct
- Ideas on how to make the civic, cultural and community facilities welcoming and accessible for all abilities
- Ideas on type of facilities and services that meet the needs of diverse communities including culturally for linguistically diverse people, young people, seniors and people with disability.
- Ideas to celebrate indigenous cultural heritage at the Central Precinct.

They will not be able to influence:

- Funding or budget allocation to the services and activities that would operate from the site.
- Funding or budget allocation to the services and activities that would operate from the site.
- Budget available to materialise the ideas and timing of when the services and activities may be provided
- The Central Precinct will be inclusive, accessible and will celebrate First Nations cultural heritage in accordance with the Vision. Council has committed to embracing connection, inclusion and diversity in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Knox Community Vision 2035Council has committed to embracing connection, inclusion and diversity in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Knox Community Vision 2035.

Information being sought in the engagement

The information from the community will feed into arts, culture and community services analyses. Council will consider this data alongside other information including financial.

Stakeholders

The communications and engagement activities for this project have been selected with these audiences in mind:

- Local arts community
  (Knox Community Arts Centre – staff, audiences, hirers; Ferntree Gully Arts and Cultural Centre - staff, tutors, participants; Ambleside - Knox Historical Society - volunteers and users; Placemakers - Treefern Potters and Woodworkers - volunteers and users; Arts Advisory Committee; 1812 Theatre; The Basin Theatre Group; SLAMS music theatre; CPP Community theatre; Dance / vocal / music / drama groups and schools; The Creative Arts Society; The Hut Gallery; Community choirs.
- People from a culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People who experience a disability
- People aged 55 and above
- Young people (aged 10 to 25)
- Young children (5 - 9 yrs)
- Early years (0-4 yrs)
- First Nations People
- Service and community care providers

  (EACH, Boronia; Eastern Health, Wantirna; Knox Emergency Relief Network - Knox Info-link;

Eastern Community Legal Centre, Croydon; Free from Family Violence, Ringwood; The Orange Door, Croydon; Headspace; Migrant Information Centre, Box Hill; Community Housing Partnerships)

- Neighbourhood Houses

  (Community Learning Centre, Rowville; Coonara house, Upper FT Gully; Mountain District Learning Centre, FT Gully; Orana Neighbourhood House, Wantirna South; The Basin Community House, The Basin)

Engagement methods

On-line survey' Have Your Say', in-person pop-ups, Advisory Committee workshops, key stakeholder conversations (consultants)

Questions summary

We will obtain information on community interest in arts and culture, and barriers. We will also obtain information on what types of arts, culture activities people would like to attend at Knox Central and what community services they would like to access.

Activities planned

Proposed methods	**Tools**	**Details**
Online Survey	Have Your Say page	Wednesday 4 Nov to Tuesday 1 Dec
In -person	Pop-ups	List of Pop-Ups: • Knox Library, Westfield • Bayswater Library • Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre • Knox Leisureworks, Boronia • Lewis Park, Wantirna South • Community Learning Centre, Rowville • Coonara house, Upper FT Gully • Mountain District Learning Centre, FT Gully (to be confirmed) • Orana Neighbourhood House, Wantirna South (to be confirmed) • The Basin Community House, The Basin (to be confirmed) • Knox U3A (to be confirmed) • Knox Infolink (to be confirmed) • Early Years Hubs in Bayswater and Wantirna South (to be confirmed)

In person	Advisory Committee meetings	• Children • Youth • Seniors • People with a disability • CALD
In person and survey	Arts community	Working with consultant on the approach

Communication

The communications objective is to

- Provide awareness to the community on what Knox Central is.
- Build excitement on the possibilities the project will bring to the Knox community
- Build awareness on how the community can have their say around the new civic, community and cultural precinct at Knox Central.

The tactics are - Councillor Bulletin, Customer Service brief, Have Your Say page, event listings on website for pop-ups, banner on website pages, email to previous Knox Central subscribers, website news article, social media posts, A5 fliers to hubs and community centres, civic centre outdoor banner, EV screen, Knox News, community newspaper ads, Mayors radio segment, department newsletters, on-hold message, Knox e-news.

Reporting and close the loop

Engagement results will be summarised in a report to Council by February 2027 including key themes, feedback trends, and recommendations. Findings will also be communicated to stakeholders via email updates, website posts, and social media.

8.4 Knox Community Development Fund 2026-2027 and Community Partnership Fund 2027-2030 Grants Assessment Panel Recommendations

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Senior Community Grants Officer, Kim Johnstone
Manager: Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
Executive: Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

SUMMARY
This report presents the recommendations of the Community Grants Assessment Panel for:

- The 2026-2027 Community Development Fund (CDF) Grants Program; and
- The 2027-2030 Community Partnership Fund (CPF) Grants Program.

The recommendations relate to funding for not-for-profit community organisations delivering programs, services and initiatives that benefit the Knox community.

For the CDF, a total of 61 applications were received. Of these:

- Thirty-four applications are recommended for full funding (refer Attachment 1);
- Eight applications are recommended for partial funding (refer Attachment 2);
- Eight applications are not recommended for funding (refer Attachment 3);
- Seven applications did not meet eligibility requirements to proceed to Panel assessment; and
- Four applications were withdrawn.

The total CDF funding recommended is $308,541.98 ($317,148.70 minus the GST adjustment of $8,606.72). This leaves $75,182.02 within the CDF budget. Similar to the approach taken last year, it is proposed that the remaining funds be redirected to other areas of community grant demand.

The Minor Grants Program has awarded approximately $80,000.00 in the first four months of this financial year, with a remaining allocation of $80,000.00 for this financial year, indicating that this grant stream is in high demand. The Grants team is continuing to actively target sporting clubs, seniors' groups and other community groups, providing information on the Minor Grant stream and encouraging groups to apply, which has resulted in a higher than usual uptake of this grant stream. It is recommended that $35,182.02 of the CDF surplus be redirected to this grant stream.

As outlined in the separate Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) report presented to Council, the existing ERF allocation is proposed for emergency relief, with a recommendation that officers investigate opportunities for alternative funding options for a homelessness outreach program with a report presented to a future Council meeting. Officers have identified the remaining CDF allocation as an alternative funding source to support a 12-month pilot Homelessness Outreach Program (HOP).

It is proposed that the remaining $40,000.00 CDF surplus be transferred to the ERF, specifically to support the pilot HOP. This additional funding would enable the outreach pilot to proceed. Officers will continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for increased and sustainable homelessness funding.

For the CPF, a total of 20 applications were received. Of these:

- Two applications are recommended for full funding (refer Attachment 4);
- Five applications are recommended for partial funding (refer Attachment 5);
- Ten applications are not recommended for funding (refer Attachment 6); and
- Three applications did not meet eligibility requirements to proceed to Panel assessment.

The seven applications recommended for CPF funding total $456,011.00 representing the full annual allocation available for the Program.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the Community Grants Assessment Panel's recommendations for:
    a. The 2026-2027 Community Development Fund Grants Program, as detailed in Attachments 1-3; and
    b. The 2027-2030 Community Partnership Fund Grants Program, as detailed in Attachments 4-6.
2. Approve the transfer of the remaining $75,182.02 from the 2026-2027 Community Development Fund allocation as follows:
    a. $35,182.02 to the Minor Grants Program; and
    b. $40,000.00 towards the Emergency Relief Fund to support a pilot Homelessness Outreach Program for 12 months, while Officers continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for increased and sustainable funding. A future report will be presented to Council with Guidelines and Selection Criteria.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Introduction

The Community Development Fund (CDF) and Community Partnership Fund (CPF) are administered under the Knox Grants Framework Policy, which provides a consistent framework for the allocation, management and review of Council grants.

The CDF is Council's annual grants program supporting local not-for-profit organisations to deliver activities and initiatives that benefit Knox residents.

The CPF provides longer-term funding to community organisations delivering services and activities that respond to identified community needs and align with the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

Applications for both programs were assessed by the Community Grants Assessment Panel against the published criteria in the Community Grants Guidelines. The Panel's recommendations are presented to Council in this report.

1.2 Community Development Fund (CDF)

1.2.1 Program Overview and Applications

The 2026-2027 CDF Grants Program has an allocated budget of $383,724.

A total of 61 applications were received, requesting $512,808.43 across all applications. This comprised:

- $442,564.67 requested through applications that progressed through the eligibility and assessment process; and
- $70,243.76 requested through applications that were subsequently deemed ineligible or withdrawn.

Applications were received across all CDF funding categories:

CDF Funding Category	Applications Received	Grant Amount Available per Application
Active Ageing	4	$2,501 - $5,000
Active Communities	3	$2,501 - $5,000
Arts and Events	9	$2,501 - $15,000
Community Strengthening	22	$2,501 - $15,000
Cultural Celebrations and Community Events	3	$2,501 - $3,000
Environment and Sustainability	2	$2,501 - $5,000
Small Equipment Grants	18	$2,501 - $5,000
Total	**61**	

1.2.2 Eligibility and Assessment

Of the 61 CDF applications received:

- Fifty met the eligibility requirements and proceeded to Panel assessment;
- Seven did not meet the eligibility requirements; and
- Four were withdrawn before completion of the assessment process.

The Community Grants Assessment Panel assessed the 50 eligible applications against the following weighted criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Clear demonstration of community need and proposed project objectives.	30%
The capacity of the organisation applying for the grant to deliver the project and manage the grant.	25%
The degree to which the project demonstrates clear financial need is feasible and financially viable.	20%
The level of benefit to Knox residents.	15%
Demonstration of consultation and partnership with others.	10%

During the assessment process, the Panel agreed to accept applications supported by one reputable and reasonably priced quote for project costs, rather than the two quotes specified in

the Guidelines. This reflected the high number of applications submitted with only one quote and enabled funding to be distributed across a broad range of categories and community priorities.

Applications that did not meet the eligibility requirements were unable to proceed for one or more of the following reasons:

- Insufficient supporting documentation or evidence of project readiness, including a lack of formal quotes or adequate project planning;
- Insufficient evidence of demonstrated need, local connection or organisational capacity;
- Budget or eligibility concerns, including inadequate supporting information;
- Equipment requests exceeding the maximum grant amount where partial funding could not be accepted, or where costs were considered excessive relative to the intended use and demonstrated organisational need; and/or
- Proposed activities being primarily religious in nature and therefore ineligible under the Community Grants Guidelines.

1.2.3 CDF Recommendations

Of the 50 eligible applications assessed by the Panel:

- Thirty-four are recommended for full funding, totalling $259,748.26;
- Eight are recommended for partial funding, totalling $57,400.44; and
- Eight are not recommended for funding.

In total, 42 applications are recommended for funding, representing 84 per cent of eligible applications. The total recommended allocation is $317,148.70.

The organisations and projects recommended for funding represent a diverse range of initiatives that respond to identified local needs and align with the objectives of the CDF and the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

Eight eligible applications, which collectively requested $76,579, are not recommended for funding. These applications were not supported due to issues including insufficiently detailed quotes or supporting evidence, limited project readiness or demonstrated local need, concerns about value for money or organisational capacity, requests exceeding the applicable funding limit, and proposed activities or expenditure that were ineligible under the Community Grants Guidelines. Where appropriate, applicants will be encouraged to consider applying through the Minor Grants Program for eligible activities or items.

The recommendations and project details are provided in:

- Attachment 1 - Applications recommended for full funding;
- Attachment 2 - Applications recommended for partial funding; and
- Attachment 3 - Applications not recommended for funding.

1.2.4 Remaining CDF Allocation

Following the recommended allocations, $75,182.02 remains within the CDF budget. Similar to the approach taken last year, it is proposed that the remaining funds be redirected to other areas of community grant demand.

The Minor Grants Program has awarded approximately $80,000.00 in the first four months of this financial year, with a remaining allocation of $80,000.00 for this financial year, indicating that this grant stream is in high demand. The Grants team is continuing to actively target sporting clubs, seniors' groups and other community groups, providing information on the Minor Grant stream and encouraging groups to apply, this has resulted in a higher than usual uptake of this grant stream. It is recommended that $35,182.02 of the CDF surplus be redirected to this grant stream.

The separate ERF report proposes allocating the full existing $150,000.00 ERF budget to emergency relief and exploring alternative funding options for homelessness outreach. Officers have identified the remaining CDF allocation as an alternative funding source for a 12-month pilot HOP.

It is proposed that $40,000.00 be transferred to the ERF specifically for the HOP. This would provide additional, one-off funding for homelessness outreach.

Therefore, it is proposed that the remaining CDF surplus be redirected as follows:

- $35,182.02 be transferred to the Minor Grants Program; and
- $40,000.00 be transferred to the ERF to support a pilot HOP for 12 months, while Officers continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for increased and sustainable funding.

1.3 Community Partnership Fund (CPF)

1.3.1 Revised CPF Funding Model

The CPF is a four-year funding program that supports not-for-profit organisations to deliver longer-term services and activities that benefit Knox residents and align with Council's strategic objectives.

Following a review in 2025, the CPF was streamlined from six funding streams to three:

- Specialist Community Support Services;
- Community Development; and
- Volunteer Resourcing and Support.

The revised model was designed to improve accessibility, strengthen alignment with Council priorities and enable the Program to respond to a broader range of community needs.

As resolved by Council in December 2025, funding for specified ongoing services previously supported through non-contested CPF streams has transitioned to Service Agreements. These services are delivered by:

- Knox Infolink;
- The Knox Learning Alliance Community Houses:
  - Coonara Community House;
  - Orana Neighbourhood House;
  - Rowville Community Learning Centre;
  - Mountain District Learning Centre; and
  - The Basin Community House;
- Knox Toy Library;

- Knox Historical Society;
- CFA; and
- SES.

These organisations deliver essential services for which there is no alternative provider within Knox. Transitioning these services to Service Agreements provides greater certainty and establishes clearer service-delivery expectations outside the competitive CPF process.

As a result of this transition and the revised CPF guidelines, the 2027-2030 funding round was different from the previous CPF round. The competitive round attracted a wider pool of applicants proposing services and initiatives that respond to a broader range of community needs.

1.3.2 Program Overview and Applications

The 2027-2030 CPF funding cycle will commence on 1 January 2027 and conclude on 30 June 2030.

As the funding cycle commences partway through the financial year, $222,443.00 will be available for the initial six-month period from 1 January to 30 June 2027. From 1 July 2027, funding will align with Council's financial year, with $456,011.00 proposed for 2027-2028.

Future CPF allocations will be subject to Council's annual budget process and any applicable adjustments.

A total of 20 CPF applications were received, requesting $1,529,211.08. These comprised:

- Nine applications for Specialist Community Support Services;
- Seven applications for Community Development;
- One application for Volunteer Resourcing and Support; and
- Three applications that were deemed ineligible.

The range of applications provided Council with an improved understanding of demand for longer-term partnership funding and demonstrated interest from organisations seeking to deliver ongoing services, programs and initiatives aligned with Council priorities.

1.3.3 Eligibility and Assessment

Of the 20 CPF applications:

- Seventeen met the eligibility requirements and proceeded to Panel assessment; and
- Three did not meet the eligibility requirements.

Eligible applications were assessed against the following weighted criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Relevance to specified funding stream objectives.	30%
Organisational capacity, including demonstrated ability and experience.	25%
Clarity of proposed funding expenditure, including evidence of realistic budget planning for the funding period.	25%
Opportunities to strengthen effective partnerships and collaboration.	10%
Scope of service delivery, including accessibility for residents across Knox.	10%

The ineligible applications did not proceed to Panel assessment for one or more of the following reasons:

- Insufficient evidence of demonstrated need, local demand, consultation, support or benefit to Knox residents;
- Duplication of existing services, limited local focus, budget concerns, broader geographic reach or limited suitability for a four-year funding commitment; and/or
- A low overall assessment against the relevant category requirements, with some proposals considered better suited to a smaller CDF-funded project.

1.3.4 CPF Recommendations

Of the 17 eligible applications assessed by the Panel:

- Two are recommended for full funding, totalling $187,432.00;
- Five are recommended for partial funding, totalling $268,579.00; and
- Ten are not recommended for funding.

The seven applications recommended for funding total $456,011.00, representing the full annual allocation available for the Program.

The recommended organisations provide essential, specialist and priority services that respond to identified community needs, address service gaps and align with the CPF objectives and the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

The CPF was a very competitive round with demand far exceeding what was available, this resulted in ten applications not recommended for funding due to:

- Demonstrated a lower level of alignment with the objectives of the relevant CPF funding stream and received lower overall weighted scores than other applications; and/or
- Did not sufficiently meet one or more assessment criteria.

These applications will be encouraged to apply through the CDF program next year for funding.

The recommendations and service details are provided in:

- Attachment 4 - Applications recommended for full funding;
- Attachment 5 - Applications recommended for partial funding; and
- Attachment 6 - Applications not recommended for funding.

1.3.5 EACH Applications for CPF

It is important for Council to note that in the previous 2022–2026 CPF round EACH was funded approximately $257,000.00 per annum to deliver both financial counselling and general counselling. However, as stated earlier, the guidelines were amended, which encouraged a broader pool of applications to be received. The total pool of funds available for CPF was $456,011.00, this therefore meant that the round was highly contested and the Panel needed to consider every application on its merits. For the current round of 2027-2030 EACH submitted two applications under the Specialist Community Support Services stream of the CPF for both financial counselling and general counselling.

The Financial Counselling application is recommended for full funding of $150,149.00 per year. The service will provide free, confidential and independent financial counselling and financial capability support to Knox residents experiencing financial hardship, cost-of-living pressures, gambling harm and other complex or compounding challenges.

EACH's second application was for Generalist Counselling, requesting $150,148.00 per year, and this application is not recommended for funding. In the context of a highly competitive round and limited available funding, the Panel prioritised EACH's Financial Counselling service because it was considered to more closely align with the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29 and identified community needs.

EACH is, however, also recommended to receive funding through the 2026-2027 CDF for two other projects:

- Food Pathways – Cook, Learn, Certify, recommended for $12,081.39; and
- L2P Volunteer project, recommended for $13,177.00.

The recommended CPF and CDF allocations support different projects and outcomes. Collectively, they enable Council to support a range of EACH initiatives while prioritising the strongest application for longer-term CPF funding, and enabling the CPF funding to be spread across the diverse range of programs applied for in CPF this round.

1.4 Community Grants Assessment Panel and Common Assessment Process

The Community Grants Assessment Panel was established to assess eligible applications in accordance with the Council's Community Grants Guidelines (Attachment 7). The objectives of the Assessment Panel are to:

- Ensure applications are assessed in a fair and transparent manner in accordance with the Knox Community Grants Guidelines;
- Provide recommendations to Council regarding the allocation of CDF and CPF funding; and
- Ensure recommended funding allocations align with Council priorities, including the Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.

The Community Grants Assessment Panel consisted of the following members:

- Varghese Pynadath - Community Representative;
- Felicity Langton - Community Representative;
- Rebecca Redfern - Community Representative;
- Kristy Lawrence - Council Officer Representative; and
- Rebecca Odermatt - Council Officer Representative (CDF Assessment Panel only).

The assessment process included Panel members individually reviewing and scoring eligible applications against the assessment criteria outlined in the Community Grants Guidelines. Applications were assessed using a scoring scale of 1 (does not meet the criteria) through to 5 (exceeds criteria), as outlined below:

Score	Description
1	The application does not demonstrate the minimum expectations of this criterion.
2	The application meets some of the expectations of this criterion.
3	The application meets all the expectations of this criterion.
4	The application exceeds most of the expectations in this criterion.
5	The application exceeds all expectations in this criterion.

The proposed transfers of the remaining CDF allocation are Officer recommendations presented separately from the Panel's recommendations on individual CDF and CPF applications. The HOP would be subject to the separate application and assessment process, if approved by Council.

1.5 Applicant Feedback and Funding Agreements

Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted and offered feedback to assist with future funding applications. Where appropriate, applicants will also be advised of alternative Council funding opportunities.

All approved CDF grants and CPF funding agreements will outline the applicable terms and conditions, including:

- Reporting requirements;
- Acquittal obligations;
- Acknowledgement of Council support; and
- Circumstances in which funding may be required to be returned.

CPF funding agreements will also include relevant service-delivery expectations.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The CDF and CPF grant rounds were promoted through a range of communication channels to increase awareness of Council's community funding opportunities and encourage eligible not-for-profit organisations to apply. Promotion of the funding opportunities included:

- Council's website;
- Council social media channels;
- Knox e-News;
- Digital screens at Council facilities, including Libraries and the Knox Civic Centre Customer Service area;
- Community Strengthening e-Bulletin; and
- Direct communication with previous applicants and relevant community organisations.

The engagement campaign achieved:

- 2,837 views and 1438 active users on Council's grants webpage;
- Reach of 11,907 people through social media promotion, generating 16,581 impressions, 367 link clicks and 419 engagements;
- Engagement with Council's e-News subscriber network of 10,305 subscribers; and
- Direct communication with community organisations through targeted emails, community networks, and stakeholder engagement.

Support provided to community organisations throughout the application period included:

- One-on-one meetings with applicants who requested additional support to discuss their proposals and seek guidance;
- Phone and email support to community organisations to discuss proposed projects, programs and services, alignment with the relevant funding objectives, eligibility requirements and the application process;
- An externally facilitated grant writing workshop delivered on 6 May 2026 to support organisations in developing stronger applications;
- Three Community Grants Information Sessions were held on 28 April, 13 May, and 28 May 2026, along with a practical grant writing workshop delivered by the Grants Team on 28 May 2026. These sessions provided community organisations with information, guidance and practical support to understand the grants of programs, eligibility requirements and application process, and to develop and strengthen their applications; and
- Three grant information drop-in sessions held on 9 and 11 June 2026, which included two sessions at the Civic Centre and one at the Knox Library. These sessions enabled applicants to ask questions, receive individual guidance, and better understand the application process and funding requirements.

Applicants were also supported through the SmartyGrants application process, including reminders to organisations where applications had been commenced but not submitted prior to the closing date.

Following the submission period, Council officers undertook eligibility checks for both funding programs and followed up with applicants where additional information was required to confirm eligibility requirements.

Consultation was also undertaken internally with relevant Council Departments to seek subject matter expertise, clarify alignment with Council strategies and plans, and identify any issues or considerations relevant to applications. This feedback was provided to support the Community Grants Assessment Panel's consideration of applications.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CDF Grants Program supports Council to better understand local community needs and build relationships with community groups and organisations across Knox. The Program provides funding to community groups and not-for-profit organisations to deliver initiatives that contribute to an active, sustainable and resilient community. These initiatives create opportunities for residents to participate in community life, strengthen social connections, and build community capacity, contributing to improved community wellbeing.

The CPF program supports not-for-profit organisations to deliver essential, specialist and priority services and activities that respond to identified community needs, address service gaps and support equitable access to services across Knox. Through its three funding streams, the CPF supports services and activities that strengthen community connections, participation, resilience and organisational capacity, as well as providing targeted support to specific population groups and communities.

Together, the CDF and CPF provide complementary opportunities for Council to support a diverse range of community organisations, services and initiatives. Funding through these programs will benefit Knox residents by strengthening community capacity, supporting access to essential services, encouraging participation and social connection, and contributing to positive community wellbeing outcomes.

The proposed transfer of remaining CDF funds would provide additional support for Minor Grants and enable a targeted homelessness outreach response. The HOP would assist people who may face barriers to accessing established services, while the full existing $150,000.00 ERF allocation would remain available for emergency relief grants.

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 recommendation is not expected to have any material environmental implications.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The CDF Grants Program has an allocated budget of $383,724.00. The recommended CDF funding totals $308,541.98 ($317,148.70 minus the GST adjustment of $8,606.72).

Similar to the approach taken in the previous year, Officers recommend that the remaining balance be redirected as follows:

- $35,182.02 to the Minor Grants Program; and
- $40,000.00 to support the Homelessness Outreach Program for 12 months.

Allocation	Amount
Recommended CDF grants, after GST adjustment	$308,541.98
Transfer to Minor Grants Program	$35,182.02
Transfer to ERF for the 12-month pilot HOP	$40,000.00
Total CDF budget allocated	**$383,724.00**

The $40,000.00 transfer would be additional to the existing $150,000.00 ERF budget, bringing the combined allocation administered through the ERF to $190,000.00. Of this amount, $150,000.00 would remain available for emergency relief grants and $40,000.00 would be designated for the pilot HOP.

The CPF Program has an allocated budget of $456,011.00 for the 2027-2028 financial year. The amount recommended for approval totals $456,011.00, representing the full available funding allocation for the Program.

Future CDF and CPF funding allocations will be subject to Council's annual budget process and any applicable rate capping adjustments.

7. RISKS

Risks associated with the administration of the CDF and CPF programs are managed in accordance with Council's Grant Framework Policy and the Knox Community Grants Guidelines 2026-2027.

The Grant Framework Policy and Guidelines outline a clear and transparent approach to grant administration, ensuring processes align with the principles of good governance and comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

These frameworks support consistent, fair and accountable decision-making across both funding programs.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Strategy 1.2 - Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.
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.

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 - CDF 2026 27 Applications - Recommended for funding in full - CM [**8.4.1** - 13 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - CDF 2026 27 Applications - Recommended for funding Partial - CM [**8.4.2** - 5 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - CDF 2026 27 Applicants - Not recommended for funding - CM [**8.4.3** - 3 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - CPF 2027-30 Applications - Recommended for funding Full - CM [**8.4.4** - 1 page]
5. Attachment 5 - CPF 202-30 Applications - Recommended for funding Partial - CM [**8.4.5** - 4 pages]
6. Attachment 6 - CPF 2027 30 Applicants - Not recommended for funding - CM [**8.4.6** - 4 pages]
7. Attachment 7 - Knox Community Grant guidelines 2026-27 [**8.4.7** - 32 pages]

Attachment 1 – Community Development Fund 2026-27
Applications Recommended for funding – FULL

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Active Ageing - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-037	Mahjong Connections C/O Coonara Community House Inc.	Coonara Mahjong Connections	Purchase of Mahjong equipment and learning resources to expand inclusive social play sessions that reduce social isolation, support mental wellbeing, encourage lifelong learning, and strengthen community connections among older adults and diverse community members.	$4,989.00	$4,989.00	Supports healthy ageing and social inclusion through a successful community-based program.
Active Ageing - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-026	CASS CARE LIMITED	Music and Chair Yoga for Healthy Ageing Program	Provision of culturally appropriate music and chair yoga sessions for older Chinese-speaking residents to reduce social isolation, support wellbeing, encourage physical activity, and strengthen social connections within the Knox community.	$3,043.23	$3,043.23	Supports healthy ageing, wellbeing and social connection opportunities for older community members through culturally responsive activities.
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-046	Coonara Community House Inc.	Coonara 50th Anniversary Community Festival	Celebration of Coonara Community House's 50th Anniversary through a community festival featuring live entertainment, multicultural activities, and family-friendly events that strengthen community connection, inclusion, participation, and local pride.	$14,256.25	$14,256.25	Supports a major community milestone event that will strengthen community connection and celebrate local history.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-020	The Basin Music Festival Association Incorporated (A004625L)	The Basin Music Festival	The Basin Music Festival is a three-day live music event showcasing local artists and bringing the community together to enjoy music, celebrate local culture and strengthen community connections.	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	Supports a long-running and highly valued community festival that attracts strong local participation and visitation.
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-033	Knox Wind Symphony Inc.	10 Year Anniversary Compositions	Knox Wind Symphony Inc. will partner with a local composer to create two original pieces of music celebrating the organisation's 10th anniversary in 2027. The project will involve musicians in developing and workshopping the compositions, culminating in their premiere at a special anniversary concert.	$7,000.00	$7,000.00	Supports community arts participation through the creation of original musical compositions celebrating the organisation's 10-year anniversary.
Cultural Celebrations & Community Events - $2,501 to $3,000	2627-CDF-063	The Orchard Church of Christ Inc.	Christmas Together at Orchard	Christmas Together at Orchard will provide free Christmas performances and a community meal, bringing local people together to celebrate, connect and reduce social isolation. The project supports people experiencing loneliness and cost-of-living pressures, with approximately 90% of participants expected to be Knox residents.	$3,090.00	$3,000.00 (The amount requested is fully funded, as it is the maximum funding available under this category).	Supports an inclusive community Christmas event designed to welcome diverse community members.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Cultural Celebrations & Community Events - $2,501 to $3,000	2627-CDF-065	Greater Eastern Malayalees Melbourne Inc.	GEM Onam 2027 – Sharing Heritage, Building Community	The Onam Celebration in Scoresby is an annual multicultural event celebrating the heritage and traditions of Kerala, South India. The event will bring approximately 500 community members together through traditional music, dance, food and activities, promoting cultural connection, inclusion and community participation.	$5,415.00	$3,000.00 (The amount requested is fully funded, as it is the maximum funding available under this category).	Supports multicultural community participation and celebrates cultural heritage through a large-scale community event in Knox.
Cultural Celbrations & Community Events $2,501 to $3000	2627-CDF-053	We Are One Club	Magic in the Moonlight – Celebrating Culture, Ability & Community	Production of a multicultural community musical celebrating Greek and Indian cultures through storytelling, music and performance, fostering social connection, cultural understanding, community participation, and multicultural inclusion across Knox.	$7,674.00	$3,000.00 (The application was initially submitted under the Arts and Events category; however, it did not meet the requirements of that category and was subsequently assessed under a more appropriate funding category. The amount requested is recommended for full funding, as it represents the	Partial funding recommended to support delivery of a multicultural community performance celebrating cultural diversity and inclusion. Partial funding was recommended as the amount requested exceeded the maximum funding available under this grant stream, which is capped at $3,000.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
						maximum funding available under this category)	
Environment & Sustainability - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-025	Knox Environment Society Inc.	Pest Proof Space	The project will install additional benches throughout the KES nursery to improve the safe handling and movement of plants. The benches will reduce manual lifting and bending, supporting the health and safety of volunteers as the nursery continues to grow.	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	Supports local environmental sustainability and a community volunteer participation initiative.
Environment & Sustainability - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-050	Knox Community Gardens Society Inc.	Refurbish and Replace Edges of Veggie Plots	The project will replace and repair deteriorated plot edges at Knox Community Gardens, improving safety and accessibility for members. The works will continue the garden's ongoing program to provide consistent, safe and sustainable plot edges while reducing the physical and financial burden on individual members.	$4,194.00	$4,194.00	Supports environmental sustainability and community participation through community gardening.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-061	Knox Gardens Tennis Club	'Vaptr Pro Rollr' water remover to provide efficient drying of our hard tennis courts.	The project will purchase a Vaptr Pro Rollr to efficiently dry the club's seven hard tennis courts after rain. The equipment will reduce court closures and cancellations, improving access for junior and senior teams, coaching, social tennis and community bookings.	$4,999.00	$4,999.00	Requested $5,000; supplier quote was for $4,999. Panel agreed to record this as full funding rather than partial, consistent with the approach taken for similar minor

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
							variances last year.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-069	Victoria State Emergency Service - Knox Unit	Defibrillator Project	The project will purchase Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) for VICSES Knox Unit emergency response vehicles. The AEDs will enable volunteers to provide immediate life-saving assistance during cardiac emergencies while responding to incidents across the Knox municipality, before Ambulance Victoria arrives.	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	Supports enhanced emergency response capability through the provision of defibrillators in operational vehicles.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-070	2nd/3rd Bayswater Scout Group	Sun-Powered Scouting - Lighting up the evenings.	The project will purchase and install solar panels, rechargeable batteries and durable lighting to provide a safe, reliable and sustainable power source for Scouting activities. The equipment will improve lighting and safety during outdoor and evening programs while reducing reliance on disposable batteries and fuel.	$3,305.25	$3,305.25	Supports youth participation and sustainability outcomes through solar-powered scouting infrastructure.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-060	Knox Boronia Churches Cricket Club	Miller Park Community Shade Grant	The project will purchase portable shade marquees to provide sun protection for players, officials, spectators and families at Miller Park. The marquees will provide accessible shade during cricket matches and activities, reducing exposure to	$3,928.09	$3,928.09	Supports safer participation in community sport through improved shade and weather protection.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
				harmful UV radiation throughout the summer season.			
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-002	The Basin Community House Inc.	Safe Homes, Safe Community, Tag It. Test It. Trust It	The project will establish Safer Homes Knox, a community-based Test and Tag service providing electrical safety checks in residents' homes. Funding will support the purchase of testing equipment and volunteer training, helping older and vulnerable residents identify and prevent electrical hazards.	$4,950.00	$4,950.00	Supports establishment of a community-based electrical Test and Tag service, improving home safety for older and vulnerable residents.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-079	Rowville Lions Club	To purchase Defibrillator and First Aids Kit	The project will purchase first aid and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) emergency response equipment for Rowville Lions Club activities and community events. The equipment will enable volunteers to respond quickly to medical emergencies and injuries, supporting the safety and wellbeing of volunteers and the wider community.	$3,749.95	$3,749.95	Supports quick-response first aid at Club activities and community events.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-035	We Are One Club	Seniors Wellbeing & Digital Inclusion Equipment Project	The project will purchase computers, table tennis tables and mahjong sets to support a weekly multicultural seniors' wellbeing program. The activities will promote digital literacy, gentle exercise, cognitive stimulation and social	$2,830.00	$2,830.00	Supports social connection, wellbeing and multicultural participation within the Knox community.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
				connection for seniors aged 60+ from diverse cultural backgrounds.			
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-017	Knox Wind Symphony Inc.	Purchase musical instrument	The project will purchase a tuba for the Knox Concert Band, enabling musicians who do not have access to their own instrument to participate. The tuba will strengthen the ensemble's sound and support accessible, inclusive community music opportunities for developing musicians.	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	Supports local arts participation and community music through equipment purchase.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-019	CHIME Choir (Choral Institute of Melbourne Inc. (CHIME))	Taking Music to the Community.	The project will purchase portable performance equipment, including microphones and a keyboard, enabling CHIME to deliver accessible, high-quality musical performances at community events. The equipment will strengthen CHIME's capacity to engage with communities across Knox and beyond.	$2,630.00	$2,630.00	Supports community arts participation and local music activities.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-011	St Johns Tecoma Cricket Club	2026/27 Technology and Member Safety Upgrades	The project will support St Johns Tecoma Cricket Club to transition to fully digital live scoring and purchase match-day marquees. The project will reduce volunteer administration, improve access to real-time game information, and provide essential shade and weather	$5,000.00	$5,000.00	Supports improved community sport participation through technology and safety upgrades.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
				protection for players, officials and spectators.			
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-058	Lowicz Polish Vocal-Dance Ensemble	Preserving Cultural Heritage Through Improved Costume Storage	The project will upgrade and expand storage within the ensemble's existing costume container to protect its collection of traditional Polish costumes. Improved storage will preserve these valuable cultural assets and support ongoing performances and cultural activities that promote community connection and diversity.	$3,916.00	$3,916.00	Supports cultural heritage and community participation through improved equipment and storage.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-055	Outer Eastern Honorary Justices Inc.	JP Stamp Supply	The project will purchase self-inking stamps containing required legislative wording for key documents. The stamps will reduce repetitive writing for volunteers, improve service efficiency, support volunteers with hand discomfort and reduce the personal costs currently incurred by volunteers.	$3,600.00	$3,600.00	Supports ongoing delivery of Justice of the Peace services within the community.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-005	EACH	Food Pathways - Cook, Learn, Certify!	Food Pathways – Cook, Learn, Certify! is a practical food skills program for young people aged 15–19. Through hands-on workshops, participants learn to prepare simple meals, budget for food and gain a recognised food-handling certificate,	$12,081.39	$12,081.39	Provides opportunities for young people to develop accredited food handling, cooking and nutrition skills, supporting

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
				building confidence, independence and employment skills.			employment pathways, practical life skills and increased participation for those most likely to benefit.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-001	trk care	Mental Health Care Packs for Headspace Clients – Building Wellbeing, Resilience and Growth Mindset for Life's Challenges	The project will provide mental health care packs to young people aged 12–25 accessing Headspace Knox. The packs will include practical wellbeing resources and strategies to support resilience, positive thinking, coping skills and long-term mental health.	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	Support the provision of care packs for vulnerable young people in care and kinship placements, delivered in partnership with local support services.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-071	The Basin Community House Inc.	40 Years of Community Connection: The Basin Community House Story	The project will document and celebrate The Basin Community House's 40-year history through community stories, interviews, photographs and historical records. A commemorative publication will preserve local history and recognise the contributions of volunteers, participants, staff and community partners.	$8,877.00	$8,877.00	Supports community participation and connection through accessible arts and cultural activities, fostering creativity, inclusion and local engagement.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-031	Feed One Feed All Inc	Food Recovery Partnership Project	The project is a partnership between Feed One Feed All and Outer East Foodshare to build relationships with Knox food businesses and producers and increase donations of surplus food. The project will strengthen local food relief and support people experiencing food insecurity.	$13,921.00	$13,921.00	Supports local food security through coordinated food recovery and distribution partnerships.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-048	Knox Infolink Inc.	Knox Community Christmas Support - building a sustainable, Knox-wide approach to 'Share the Joy'!	The Knox Community Christmas Support Project provides festive food hampers, fresh food and gifts to approximately 1,000 individuals and families experiencing financial and social hardship. Delivered through a partnership of local community agencies, the project supports Knox residents to celebrate Christmas with dignity.	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	Supports vulnerable Knox families through a dignified and community-led Christmas support program.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-014	Orana Neighbourhood House	Learn It, Fix It, Save It - Building Financial Resilience in Knox	Learn It, Fix It, Save It is a free community program helping Knox residents build practical skills, reduce household costs and strengthen connections. Workshops and community activities will cover budgeting, cooking, repairs, scam awareness, homework support, swaps and other practical skills.	$14,821.64	$14,821.64	Supports community education and financial resilience through practical, accessible learning opportunities.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-021	EACH	L2P Volunteer Mentors to complete youth mental health first aid training	The project will provide Youth Mental Health First Aid training for L2P volunteers who mentor young people. The training will build volunteers' skills and confidence to recognise mental health concerns, provide appropriate initial support and connect young people with professional assistance when needed.	$13,177.00	$13,177.00	Supports youth wellbeing through mental health first aid training for volunteer mentors.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-067	Foothills Community Care Inc.	Foothills Inclusive Volunteering Pilot Project	The Foothills Inclusive Volunteering Pilot Project will support people facing barriers to volunteering through tailored training, one-on-one mentoring and dedicated coordination. The project will create accessible volunteering opportunities across community meals, delivery networks and op shops, strengthening inclusion, skills and community connection.	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	Supports volunteer participation and inclusion outcomes for Knox residents. The funding agreement will ensure commitment that the majority of volunteers that are benefiting from this program are Knox residents.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-054 Felicity COI	Anchor Community Care Ltd.	Keeping Them Connected	Keeping Them Connected is a community participation program providing recreational activities and family events for children and young people in foster and kinship care and their carers, to strengthen relationships, social connection and wellbeing.	$8,712.00	$8,712.00	Supports improved wellbeing and social connection for children and young people in foster and kinship care.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-057	Share Space Inc	The Study Space	The Study Space is a free weekly homework and study support program for Knox school students, delivered by trained community volunteers. The program supports students who may not have access to private tutoring while providing volunteers with meaningful opportunities to share their skills and strengthen community connections.	$10,313.00	$10,313.00	Supports educational participation and community wellbeing through the provision of a structured study support program for children and young people.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-059	Knox Repair Cafe Inc.	Knox Repair Cafe Community Capacity & Sustainability Expansion Project	The project will expand KRC's volunteer-led repair and sustainability program, delivering 35 free repair sessions across four mobile locations in Knox. The program will reduce household waste, help residents save money, develop practical skills and create inclusive volunteering opportunities.	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	Supports circular economy outcomes, waste reduction and community education initiatives.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-012	Mountain District Learning Centre	CHL Community Gardening	The CHL Community Gardening project will revitalise raised garden beds, providing residents with opportunities to grow seasonal vegetables and flowers together. The project will support fresh food access, reduce cost-of-living	$6,454.46	$6,454.46	Supports circular economy outcomes, waste reduction and community education initiatives.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
				pressures and strengthen community connection through shared gardening.			
Totals					**$266,927.26**	**$259,748.26**	

Note: The Total Amount Requested and Recommended amounts differ by $7,179.00, due to:

- The Orchard Church of Christ Inc. – Requested $3,090.00 however the maximum funding available under this category is $3,000.00.
- Greater Eastern Malayalees Melbourne Inc. – Requested $5,415.00 however the maximum funding available under this category is $3,000.00
- We Are One Club – Requested $7,674.00. The application was initially submitted under the Arts and Events category; however, it did not meet the requirements of that category and was subsequently assessed under a more appropriate funding category. The maximum funding available under this new category is $3,000.00.

Attachment 2 – Community Development Fund 2026-27
Applications Recommended for funding – PARTIAL

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-023	Outer East Foodshare Inc.	More sustainable local food for locals	The project will activate unused garden beds and install additional wicking beds to grow fresh vegetables and herbs for local food relief. It will also trial community garden education sessions, supporting healthy eating, food security and culturally appropriate produce for Knox residents.	$15,000.00	**$9,767.00**	Partial funding recommended for wicking garden beds, food-growing education workshops and a reduced contribution towards landscaping works. A formal landscaping quote was not provided, limiting the Panel's ability to verify the proposed expenditure in accordance with the Guidelines supporting documentation requirements.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-073	The Onemda Association Inc.	Inclusive Learning Pathways at The Basin Neighbourhood House	Provision of supported community learning opportunities for people with intellectual disability, building skills, confidence, social inclusion, and community connection through participation in accessible community-based classes and programs.	$12,579.41	**$5,841.00**	Partial funding recommended for inclusive learning programs. Project worker costs were not supported as insufficient information was provided to verify the proposed labour rates against relevant industry standards, as required under the Guidelines for short-term wages.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-036	Aquaholics Club Inc.	Ocean Stewards Knox	Training and support for Knox residents to participate in environmental volunteering, citizen science, and stewardship activities that build environmental knowledge, community connections, volunteer skills, and local environmental outcomes.	$15,000.00	**$13,000.00**	Partial funding recommended for environmental education and volunteer development activities. The application did not sufficiently demonstrate that the full administration and promotional costs were justified against the anticipated participation levels, having regard to the Guidelines assessment criteria relating to demonstrated community need, financial viability and benefit to Knox residents. Funding was therefore prioritised towards direct project delivery activities that support the intended community and environmental outcomes.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-051	Melbourne Steam Traction Engine Club Inc.	Digital Collection Catalogue	Development of a digital collection management system to preserve and showcase machinery heritage through cataloguing, QR-enabled exhibit information, photo galleries, multilingual access, and improved visitor engagement.	$11,416.00	**$5,000.00**	Partial funding recommended for eligible equipment costs, capped at the maximum $5,000 equipment allocation under the Guidelines. Ongoing software subscriptions were not supported as they did not meet the eligible expenditure requirements.
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-006	Tabulam and Templer Homes for the Aged	TTHA Weihnachtsmarkt (German Christmas Market) - Connecting Residents, Carers & Community	TTHA Weihnachtsmarkt is an expanded cultural festival bringing the Knox community together through German Christmas traditions, creative activities and intergenerational experiences. The event will promote cultural diversity, community connection and participation through workshops, storytelling, art, language activities and music.	$15,000.00	**$10,931.44**	Partial funding recommended for cultural activities, workshops, entertainment and local promotion. Letterbox distribution costs were reduced as the application did not sufficiently demonstrate the benefit to Knox residents to justify the full expenditure (the costs included distribution to postcodes and suburbs far beyond Knox, this was not supported). Balloon activities were not supported due to environmental sustainability concerns under the Guidelines.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-022	Rotary Club of Bayswater Inc.	53rd Knox Art Show	Delivery of the 53rd Annual Knox Art Show, showcasing artworks and photography from emerging and established artists, providing cultural experiences, artist development opportunities, community engagement, and support for local Rotary initiatives.	$10,195.00	**$6,639.00**	Partial funding recommended for core event delivery costs. The application did not fully meet the Guidelines supporting documentation requirements, as some proposed expenditure was supported by quotes from the previous year or bank statements showing previous expenditure, rather than current quotes to substantiate the proposed project costs. Catering expenditure was also limited in accordance with the Guidelines, which allow catering costs up to 20% of the grant amount.
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-043	Casey Tamil Manram	The Tamil Festival Australia 2027	Delivery of a multicultural community festival celebrating Tamil culture through music, dance, food and traditional activities, fostering cultural inclusion, community participation, social connection, and multicultural understanding within Knox.	$15,000.00	**$3,000.00**	Partial funding recommended towards venue hire. The application did not sufficiently demonstrate the additional financial need to justify the full request, having regard to the overall project budget and external funding already secured.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments
							This was considered against the Guidelines assessment criteria relating to financial need, feasibility and financial viability.
Active Ageing - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-024	Aura Social Foundation	Aura Chai & Chat: Community-Led Social Connection and Wellbeing Sessions for Seniors (8 Weeks)	Provision of culturally safe bilingual social connection and wellbeing sessions for older Hindi and Punjabi-speaking residents, reducing social isolation, supporting mental wellbeing, and strengthening community participation and belonging.	$4,868.00	**$3,222.00**	Partial funding recommended for facilitation, venue hire and refreshments. Some proposed transport costs were not sufficiently demonstrated as eligible under the Guidelines, including any applicable accessibility-related exceptions. Supporting documentation was also considered in determining the recommended allocation.
Totals					**$99,058.41**	**$57,400.44**	

Attachment 3 – Community Development Fund 2026-27

Applications NOT RECOMMENDED for funding

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Panel Comments
Active Communities - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-038	Ferntree Gully Falcons Basketball Club	Girls Basketball Skills and Participation Program	Delivery of free girls' basketball skills and development programs during the school holidays, increasing participation, confidence, skill development, social connection, and ongoing engagement in sport for girls in the Knox community.	$5,000.00	This application was declined as there were no formal quotes received to substantiate project costs. The group was contacted via email to resubmit their application however failed to do so. The group will be encouraged to apply for a Minor Grant.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-068	The Men's Table Limited	Healthy Men making Healthy Communities in Knox	Provision of a peer-led men's support program that reduces social isolation, strengthens mental wellbeing, promotes positive social connections, and provides early intervention support for men in the Knox community.	$15,000.00	The application was declined following consideration of delivery arrangements, budget allocation and expected community benefit. The Panel determined the proposal did not represent sufficient value relative to the funding requested.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-074	Rowville Lions Club They have also applied for a Defibrillator and First Aid Kit in small equipment	Grant to assist our club in purchasing for Lion Eye Health Program kit.	Provision of community-based vision screening for children attending early learning centres and primary schools, supporting early detection of vision issues, improving health and wellbeing outcomes, and increasing access to preventative eye health services for local families.	$9,100.00	The application was declined because the funding request was for equipment, for which the maximum available funding is $5,000. The applicant was unable to accept partial funding.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Panel Comments
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-056	The Basin Community House Inc Applied for 3 CDF	Living Well with Diabetes - Knox Community Support Program	Provision of a community-based peer support group for people living with diabetes, their carers and families, promoting social connection, access to health information, self-management skills, and improved wellbeing within the Knox community.	$9,766.00	The application was declined due to concerns regarding project design, supporting evidence and demonstrated need. The Panel was not satisfied that the proposal sufficiently established its capacity to deliver specialised diabetes-related information.
Community Strengthening - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-032	Underneath My Umbrella	Share Your Story project 2027 - 1,000 faces	Development and delivery of the Share Your Story community awareness project, featuring a survivor-led exhibition that raises awareness of family violence, supports community understanding, promotes social connection, and amplifies lived experiences of recovery and resilience.	$15,000.00	The application was declined due to budget, eligibility and project planning concerns. The Panel was not satisfied that the proposal met grant requirements or provided adequate supporting information.
Arts & Events - $2,501 to $15,000	2627-CDF-030	Bhakti Tarang Inc.	Knox Rang Barse - Festival of Colours (Holi) 2027	Delivery of the Festival of Colours (Holi), a multicultural community celebration featuring cultural activities, food, music and entertainment that promotes social inclusion, cultural awareness, community participation, and connections across diverse communities in Knox.	$15,000.00	The application was declined despite recognition of its multicultural community focus. The Panel determined that key requirements relating to project readiness, quotes and demonstrated local connection had not been sufficiently addressed.

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Title	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Panel Comments
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-027	Hindu Satasang Mandal of Victoria	Enhance Social Networking	Purchase of digital equipment and facility resources, including tablets, a Smart TV and cleaning equipment, to improve accessibility, community participation, remote engagement, visitor communication, and the overall visitor experience at the temple.	$2,713.00	The application sought funding for digital equipment to support livestreaming, digital visitor registration and communication with members. The application was assessed as ineligible under the funding Guidelines because the equipment would be used to primarily support the livestream of weekly Ramayan sessions. As these sessions are religious in nature, the proposed activities fall outside the scope of the grant program and therefore cannot be funded. The applicant will be encouraged to apply for Minor Grant for eligible items.
Small Equipment Grants - $2,501 to $5,000	2627-CDF-018	Caribbean Speed Club	Purchase of Club Administration Laptop	Purchase of a secure club administration laptop to improve governance, record management, data security, committee continuity, and the efficient administration of club membership, volunteer, coaching, and financial information.	$5,000.00	The application was declined as the requested equipment cost was considered excessive relative to the intended use and demonstrated organisational need. The applicant will be encouraged to apply for a Minor Grant.
TOTAL					**$76,579.00**	

Attachment 4 – Community Partnership Fund 2027-30
Applications Recommended for funding – FULL

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-014	Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC)	Provides integrated legal and social support to Knox residents experiencing family violence, elder abuse, financial hardship and other complex legal and social issues, with a focus on early intervention, prevention and vulnerable communities.	$37,283.00	$37,283.00	Supports the continuation of an established community service through funding consistent with the organisation's existing CPF allocation.	$33,899.80
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-027	EACH Ltd. - Financial Counselling	Provides free, confidential and independent Financial Counselling and Financial Capability services to Knox residents experiencing financial hardship, stress or vulnerability, with targeted support for people experiencing complex and compounding challenges.	$150,149.00	$150,149.00	Supports financial wellbeing and early intervention for Knox residents experiencing financial hardship, cost-of-living pressures and gambling harm through accessible financial counselling services.	$123,280.30
Totals				**$187,432.00**	**$187,432.00**		**$157,180.10**

Attachment 5 – Community Partnership Fund 2027-30
Applications Recommended for funding – PARTIAL

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-013	Outer East Foodshare Inc.	Provides a centralised food rescue and distribution service connecting surplus food with emergency relief agencies to improve food access for vulnerable Knox residents and reduce food waste.	$104,723.00	**$53,579.00**	Supports regional food relief services by strengthening OEF's capacity to coordinate essential support for people experiencing food insecurity across the outer east. The Panel recommended funding to go towards coordination wages and electricity costs, supporting a staged increase from no paid staff to a 0.8 FTE position. The Panel also noted that contributions should be sought from Yarra Ranges and Maroondah councils, given the project's regional reach.	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-009	Feed One Feed All Incorporated	Provides nutritious meals made from rescued surplus food to people experiencing food insecurity in Knox, while supporting social connection, community participation and the capacity of local food relief agencies.	$25,000.00	**$20,000.00**	Supports community connection and food security through a volunteer-led meal delivery service supporting vulnerable Knox residents. Partial funding of $20,000 was recommended to support vehicle operating costs, volunteer training, small equipment, food packaging and cleaning materials, and a contribution towards marketing. Full funding was not recommended as the professional chef/consultant engagement was not supported.	0
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-022	Foothills Community Care Inc.	Provides accessible community meals, outreach and social connection for Knox residents experiencing hardship and isolation, with a focus on early intervention, warm referrals and strengthening community participation.	$78,100.00	**$40,000.00**	The organisation supports community connection and food security through its established weekly community meal and casserole programs, providing assistance to Knox residents experiencing hardship or social isolation. The Panel recommended partial funding of $40,000 as a contribution towards coordinator	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
						wages associated with the delivery of both programs for the Knox community. This represents an increased level of support compared with previous funding, which primarily supported the casserole program. As the organisation is now based in Upwey, the Panel determined that Council funding should be directed specifically towards the components of the programs that directly benefit Knox residents. Funding was therefore recommended as a contribution rather than full-cost support, with eligible expenditure limited to program-related wages, transport and venue hire associated with delivery of the Knox-based programs.	
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and	CPF2730-025	Saint Paul's Boronia	Provides a welcoming weekly community meal that strengthens social connection, inclusion and participation for	$27,009.50	**$25,000.00**	Supports community connection and social inclusion through a weekly community meal program that provides nutritious meals and builds local support networks.	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested	Total Amount Recommended	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
up to $150,149.50			Knox residents experiencing social isolation or hardship.			The Panel agreed to fund the food component (based on an indicative cost of $5.00 per two-course meal) plus a contribution toward the program's modest administration costs (equivalent to approximately one day per month).	
3. Volunteer Resourcing and Support - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-020	Coonara Community House	Supports volunteering and community participation by connecting Knox residents with local volunteer opportunities and strengthening the capacity of community organisations to recruit and support volunteers.	$150,145.80	**$130,000.00**	Strengthens volunteer participation in Knox by connecting volunteers with local opportunities, supporting volunteer development and building the capacity of community organisations to engage and retain volunteers. The Panel supported the partnership model with the five Neighbourhood Houses and associated volunteer initiatives, while seeking a stronger focus on direct support to volunteers rather than businesses seeking volunteers. Full funding was not recommended, with contingency costs not supported.	$160,798.00
Total				**$384,978.30**	**$268,579.00**		**$160,798.00**

Attachment 6 – Community Partnership Fund 2027-30
Applications NOT RECOMMENDED for funding

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-004	Deaf Victoria Incorporated	Provides accessible hearing health screening, education and referral support for Knox school students and older residents, addressing hearing-related barriers, promoting early intervention and supporting social connection and wellbeing.	$141,845.74	The application was declined due to insufficient evidence of demonstrated need and local demand, including a lack of consultation with schools and retirement villages. Concerns were also identified regarding the project budget, limited demonstrated benefit to Knox residents and the applicant's capacity to establish the program locally while operating across a broader geographic area.	0
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-016	Different Journeys	Provides neurodivergent lived-experience peer support, mentoring and social connection for young people, adults, families and carers, strengthening community participation, service navigation and wellbeing for Knox residents.	$172,669.00	The application was declined following the Panel's assessment of the proposed program, including consideration of the delivery model, proposed staffing costs and overall suitability for funding under the program. The Panel considered that the proposal would be more appropriately developed and demonstrated through a smaller-scale, single-term project before consideration for longer-term funding. The organisation will be encouraged to consider applying for CDF funding for a future project.	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-033	EACH Ltd - Generalist	Provides accessible therapeutic counselling and early intervention for Knox residents experiencing mental health challenges, social isolation, disadvantage and vulnerability, supporting wellbeing and connection to appropriate services.	$150,148.00	The application was declined in the context of a highly competitive funding round, with a high number of applications received in this category and limited funding available. In determining funding priorities, the Panel also considered the proposed staffing costs and on-costs. Given the funding available, the Panel prioritised support for the Financial Counselling program, which was considered to more closely align with Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan and identified community needs.	$159,460.40
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-023	SALAMFEST Incorporated	Delivers community events that strengthen cultural inclusion, community participation and local economic opportunities for culturally diverse communities, supported by experienced event management and established community partnerships.	$16,800.00	The application was declined due to insufficient evidence of demonstrated need and benefit to Knox residents. Concerns were also identified regarding the project budget and limited evidence of consultation or support from local community settings.	0
1. Specialist Community Support Services - above $15,001 and	CPF2730-005	SecondBite	Provides nutritious frozen ready-to-eat meals through Outer East Foodshare to strengthen local food relief services and improve access to healthy food for Knox residents experiencing food	$72,160.00	The application was declined as the organisation operates on a Statewide basis. While the Panel recognised that Knox residents benefit from the organisation's services through existing local partnerships, including Outer East Foodshare, the proposed service demonstrated a more limited direct connection to Knox compared with other	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
up to $150,149.50			insecurity and disadvantage.		applications. In the context of available funding, the Panel prioritised applications with a stronger local presence and more direct delivery of services to the Knox community.	
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-030	Share Space Inc.	Provides coordinated community support to reduce food insecurity, financial hardship and social isolation, strengthening access to food relief, emergency assistance, community connection and referral services for Knox residents.	$49,987.94	The application was declined as the Panel considered that progressing directly from Minor Grants funding to a four-year CPF partnership represented a significant increase in funding and organisational commitment. The Panel considered that further development of the organisation's funding and delivery track record through CDF would be more appropriate at this stage.	0
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-003	BrainLink Services Limited	Provides accessible community forums that build awareness, peer connection and support for people living with brain injury, carers and the wider Knox community.	$99,853.60	The application was declined due to insufficient demonstrated benefit to Knox residents. Concerns were also identified regarding the broader geographic reach of the event, significant staffing costs, and the suitability of committing to the same event format over a four-year period.	0
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-026	Kidsafe Victoria	Supports child safety and injury prevention through accessible education, training and practical support for Knox families, children and community professionals.	$39,656.00	The application was declined as it scored towards the lower end of the funding category and was considered less competitive when assessed against other applications. The Panel determined that the application did not demonstrate a sufficiently strong case for funding relative to the overall quality and merit of other applications within the category.	0

Category	App ID	Applicant	Project Description	Total Amount Requested (inc. GST)	Panel Comments	Previous partnership funding per annum (2025-26)
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-012	Knox Wind Symphony Inc.	Provides accessible community music programs that develop musical skills, social connection and wellbeing for Knox musicians of varying ages and abilities.	$22,836.00	The application was declined due to a low overall assessment against the category criteria. The proposed project was considered more appropriately suited to the CDF funding stream, particularly given the organisation's existing CDF funding history.	0
2. Community Development - above $15,001 and up to $150,149.50	CPF2730-024	We Are One Club Inc.	Creates an inclusive multicultural community hub that promotes cultural connection, social inclusion and participation through shared activities, workshops and community events for Knox residents.	$50,000.00	The application was declined as it scored towards the lower end of the funding category and was considered less competitive when assessed against other applications. The Panel determined that the application did not demonstrate a sufficiently strong case for funding relative to the overall quality and merit of other applications within the category.	0

Attachment 7

Knox Community Grant Guidelines 2026 – 2027



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Front cover image credit: Orana Neighbourhood House 'Connecting Through Community Lunches' Project

Introduction

Knox Council provides an annual budget to a range of grant programs designed to capture the priorities of the community and enable our community to thrive. The below grant programs are underpinned by the following principles:

- Funded projects/activities will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council's objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups is encouraged;
- Grants' processes will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- Grants' processes will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

The community grants outlined in these Guidelines are:

Minor Grants Program	These can help Knox's not-for-profit community organisations with quick response grants up to $2,500. Grant applications are assessed and allocated monthly to eligible groups. Examples include first aid training for volunteers, purchase of portable tables and chairs, craft materials for art therapy program.	Monthly
Community Development Fund	This funding is for projects, programs and events that benefit the Knox community across seven different categories. Examples include projects that build community participation, inclusion and sustainability such as multicultural workshops, youth leadership projects, development of volunteer base, mental health peer-support groups.	Yearly

Community Partnership Fund	The Program assists not for profit organisations with eligible operational costs to deliver measurable community outcomes that respond to local priorities and identified strategic service requirements and will provide funding from 2027-2030. Organisations need to offer programs aligned to the strategic priorities in the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.	4-Yearly

Equity and Inclusion

Council is committed to equity and inclusion and welcomes applications from groups that may experience disadvantages or barriers to participation. This includes (but is not limited to) First Nations Peoples, LGBTIQA+ communities, over 55's, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disability. We also encourage partnership and collaboration between organisations.

Who can apply?

Organisations who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for the:

- Minor Grant Program;
- Community Development Fund;
- Community Partnership Fund.

Operational location

Applicants must be located within, or be delivering a project within, the City of Knox.

Australian Business Number

The organisation must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or complete a Statement by Supplier form.

Governing Body

The organisation must have a Committee of Management or similar governing body that accepts responsibility for administering the grant.

Previous Grant Expenditure

The organisation must have provided evidence to Council's satisfaction regarding the expenditure of any previous grants received from Council.

No Outstanding Debts

The organisation must have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council.

Not-For-Profit Status

The organisation must be a not-for-profit legal entity that provides services, support, or activities to the Knox community.

Public Liability Insurance

The organisation must hold adequate public liability insurance appropriate for the activity outlined in the application.

Required Permits and Plans

All required permits and approvals, including Council permits, must be obtained as part of the funding agreement.

Grant Conditions and Compliance Requirements

Prohibited Expenditures and Funding Exclusions

- In line with the Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy, Council grant funding will not be provided to organisations or businesses that operate electronic gaming machines or other gambling activities strongly associated with gambling harm. Grant funding will also not support events, activities or programs delivered at venues where electronic gaming machines operate.
- Grant funds cannot be used for the purchase of alcohol in any circumstances. This includes items that support the consumption, storage or sale of alcohol.
- Expenditure contributing to carbon emissions when more sustainable options are available, including the purchase or use of single-use plastics, is not permitted.
- Funding will not be provided for CCTV, visual surveillance, cameras, monitoring systems, or associated installation and maintenance costs.

- State or Federal government responsibilities – projects may not be an event or activity that is the core funding responsibility of another level of government.
- Projects, programs or activities delivered by political or religious groups where the primary purpose is to promote political views, advocate for a political party, or promote religious beliefs, doctrine or worship.
- Educational institutions: Grants cannot be used for school curriculum activities or projects that only take place at, or benefit, a school.
- Voucher support must be limited to grocery purchases only. This includes supermarket-specific vouchers or gift cards (for example, Coles or Woolworths) that restrict the purchase of alcohol and tobacco. Vouchers must not be redeemable for alcohol or tobacco products.
- Ticketed events must include projected ticket income in their application to ensure accessibility considerations and enable proper assessment and acquittal.
- Projects must be accessible to, and provide a clear benefit for, Knox residents. Applications that are not open to the wider Knox community will only be considered where a significant community benefit can be clearly demonstrated.
- Capital works and the purchase or installation of fixed assets are not eligible for funding under this grant program. This includes any works or items that create, enhance, or extend the life of a physical asset or infrastructure. Capital works generally refer to construction, structural improvements, or permanent upgrades to land, buildings, or facilities. Fixed assets are items of enduring value that are not easily moved and are intended for long-term use.

Examples of ineligible capital works and fixed assets include (but are not limited to):

- Construction of new buildings, extensions, or permanent structures
- Renovations, refurbishments, or upgrades to existing facilities (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, clubrooms)
- Installation or replacement of fixed equipment (e.g built-in seating, lighting infrastructure)
- Purchase of large or fixed equipment that becomes part of a facility (e.g. scoreboards, fixed shelving, commercial kitchen fit-outs)

What may be considered eligible:

- Portable equipment (e.g. marquees, tables, chairs)

Grant conditions / Use of grant Funds

Once a grant has been approved, grant funds must be used solely for the purpose approved in the grant application and Funding Agreement. Grant funds must not be

gifted, transferred or passed on to another organisation, either as cash or through the purchase or transfer of equipment.

Any changes to the approved use of grant funds will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and require prior written approval from Council Officers within the Community Grants Team (delegated Officers) using approved forms.

Funding Agreement

All successful applicants are required to enter into a funding agreement within three weeks of grant approval. Funding agreements detail the terms and conditions of the grant, accountability requirements for project delivery and financial reporting expectations.

Alignment with the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

All funding applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will benefit the Knox community and align with the objectives and priorities of the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Applicants must address this requirement through mandatory application questions. Demonstrated alignment will form part of the eligibility screening and assessment criteria. Applications that fail to demonstrate alignment will not be considered for funding.

Conflict of Interest - Community Group Members

Any individual or related business/organisation benefiting from grant funds must declare this conflict. If work or quotes are supplied by a connected party, it must be reported and supported by a second quote.

Change of Circumstances

We understand from time to time, circumstances may change. Please contact the Community Grants Team on grants@knox.vic.gov.au or 03 9298 8000 to discuss your project and any foreseeable impacts to the delivery of your project.

Child Safe Standards

Council is committed to creating a child safe and child friendly city. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to ensuring all children and young people are safe, valued and protected from harm. Child safety is embedded in the everyday work of Council staff, contractors and volunteers.

All organisations funded through the Knox Grants Program must comply with all relevant child safety laws, including but not limited to, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005. This includes:

- Reviewing the Worker Screening Act 2020 to understand any Working with Children Check (WWCC) requirements;
- Reviewing the Child Employment (Amendment) Act 2022 to determine whether your organisation requires a licence to employ children under 15;
- Implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards, where applicable; and
- Understanding your organisation's obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Plain language guides, fact sheets-language guides, fact sheets and other resources are available from the Social Services Regulator: Child Safe Standards | vic.gov.au.

Compliance with Child Safe Standards

As a condition of receiving Community Grant funding, organisations must comply with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

If your organisation has direct or indirect contact with children under 18, your application must include evidence of your organisation's commitment to child safety. This includes:

- Policies and procedures related to the Child Safe Standards (where required organisations with no involvement with children are not expected to provide these);
- Confirmation that all relevant staff and volunteers hold a Working with Children Check, where applicable.

Suspension or Withholding of Payments

Council may withhold or suspend funding where reporting is late, incomplete or unsatisfactory; where the Applicant has failed to remedy a breach; or where Council reasonably considers there to be a risk to health, safety, child safety or Council's reputation. Payments resume once issues are remedied.

The Role of an Auspice

An auspice arrangement is when a larger, eligible organisation supports a smaller unincorporated group to apply for and manage a grant. The larger organisation, known as the auspice, is responsible for managing the grant funds and providing public liability insurance for the activity or event.

If you wish to use an auspice, you must provide evidence of their agreement, usually a letter which should be uploaded with your grant application in SmartyGrants. The auspice organisation must also meet the Eligibility Criteria outlined in the 'Who Can Apply' section of these Guidelines.

Events/Artwork on Council-Owned Sites

All relevant permits and applications must be received prior to grant money being released.

Equity, Inclusion and Respect

Grant recipients are required to demonstrate behaviour that promotes respect, integrity, inclusivity, accountability and responsibility throughout the delivery of the funded project or activity. Activities should actively foster an inclusive environment for all community members, including culturally and linguistically diverse participants, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups. Compliance with this requirement will be assessed as part of the grant acquittal process. Organisations that fail to uphold these standards may be required to return grant funds to Council and may not be eligible for future grant funding.

Privacy of Information

As part of the Information Privacy Act Statement of Consent, Council collects information from Grant applicants for the purpose of registering and administering grant applications for the specified funding period. The information may also be used to send information and to ascertain satisfaction with our services. The information will not be disclosed except as required by law. In particular, the information will not be disclosed to others for marketing purposes.

Application Process

How to apply

Council's grant programs are accessed through the SmartyGrants Online Portal platform where you can read more about the grant and view the application form. Once you start your application, you can upload documents and save your progress, returning as often as needed before submitting it to Council.

When will I know the outcome of my application?

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email following consideration and approval by Council. Applicants will be advised of the outcome in the days following the relevant Council meeting.

What happens if my application is successful?

Successful applicants will be required to sign a formal funding agreement outlining the details of the grant. This Agreement will clearly define the approved purpose of the funding and set out the terms and conditions to support effective project delivery and ensure public funds are used appropriately.

What happens if my application is unsuccessful?

If you are not successful, we encourage you to talk to the Community Grants Team to seek feedback on your application and make further applications in the future.

Privacy and Data Protection Act

As part of the Information Privacy Act Statement of Consent, Council collects information from grant applicants to register and manage grant applications for the relevant funding period. The information may also be used to provide related updates and to assess satisfaction with Council services. Your information will not be shared except as required by law and will not be disclosed for marketing purposes.

Administrative Updates

From time to time, minor administrative updates may be required to this document. Changes that do not significantly affect the Guidelines can be made administratively and approved by the CEO. Examples include updates to Department or position names, Government Department titles, or minor legislative amendments with no substantial impact. Any changes that could materially affect the intent of the Guidelines must be submitted to Council for consideration.

I Need Help

If you are having difficulty applying online, we are here to help. Contact the Community Grants Team on 03 9298 8000 or email grants@knox.vic.gov.au.

Minor Grants Program

The Minor Grants Program provides accessible funding to support community-led activities in Knox that promote volunteer effort, civic participation, and align with the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.

Grants are available for small, short-term projects, activities and project-related items, up to a maximum of $2,500 per financial year. Applications are assessed and allocated monthly, except in January.

Application Amount	Assessment and Determination	Grant Accountability and Acquittal
$1 to $2500	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly Ordinary Meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement and Acquittal required that show proof of expenditure/ purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice or bank statement) and benefit of grant.

Minor Grant Eligibility

Refer to page 5 of the Guidelines.

Minor Grant Process

All applications must be completed through the SmartyGrants Online Portal and are considered at each mid-month Council meeting.

Key dates for application submissions

Grant submission deadline	Council meeting date
22 June 2026	13 July 2026
20 July 2026	10 August 2026
24 August 2026	14 September 2026
21 September 2026	12 October 2026
19 October 2026	9 November 2026
23 November 2026	14 December 2026

Your project / activity start date must be after the Council meeting date where your application is being presented for approval. **Projects / Activities that are due to begin before the Council meeting date will not be considered.**

We may request extra information about your application so please allow enough time before the monthly deadline. Otherwise, we may defer your application to the next month's Council meeting.

The administration and management of the grants program is guided by the Community grants Framework policy which can be accessed via Council's website - Community grants framework policy.

Application Submission Deadlines

Applications must be submitted at least 15 working days before the Council meeting to allow time for assessment.

Late applications for the May Council meeting will be carried over to the new financial year.

Minor Grants will not be awarded during June due to end of financial year processes, or in January, as Council meetings are not held during this period. Applicants will be advised if their application is delayed and assessed as part of the new financial year processes.

Minor Grants Program Oversight

The Minor Grants Program and any allocation and payment of Minor Grants will be temporarily suspended prior to any Council election or by-election, including the 2028 Council election, in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy.

Minor Grant applications that may be supported

- Small, incidental (secondary or miscellaneous) amounts for one-off projects, activities or equipment purchases or repairs that will benefit Knox residents, with funds to be expended within 12 months of receiving the grant.
- Funding for equipment purchases is only available to groups located within Knox.
- Applications that support groups to minimise waste or adapt to climate change are encouraged.
- Funding is available for amounts up to $2,500. Applicants may contribute additional funding towards the project or activity
- Have no overdue grant acquittals and have successfully acquitted previous grants received.

- Applicants must have no outstanding debts owing to Council. This will be verified by Council as part of the application assessment process.
- Sporting equipment required for regular everyday participation (e.g. balls) may be funded up to a maximum of $500 per annum.
- You can only include catering costs up to 20% of the amount you apply for. If Council gives you less than you requested, the amount allowed for catering will be adjusted accordingly.

Minor Grant applications and expenditure that won't be supported

The following outlines applications that will not be supported and costs that grant funding cannot be used for. Some items are applicable at the assessment stage, while others are applicable to how grant funds may be spent.

- Activities that take place in a private residence.
- An individual person's expenses.
- Applications that are more appropriately funded under another Council grant program.
- Funding will not be provided for the same or substantially similar activity from any Knox Grants Program stream or other Council funding source in either the current or previous financial year.
- Applications where the funding will be used to provide grants to a third party.
- Retrospective payments or expenses for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval.
- Recurring applications – Equipment that was funded in the previous financial year will not be supported again, unless a clear and significant community benefit can be demonstrated.
- Camps that include overnight stays.
- Operating expenses – salaries, insurance, utilities, cleaning, general maintenance, subscriptions, annual software licences, website or social media maintenance fees, professional grant writer fees.
- Funding for prizes, fundraising, competitions, sponsorships, donations, trophies, vouchers, tobacco, gambling or gifts, e-cigarettes and fireworks.
- Transport costs for participants are not supported. This includes bus hire, public transport fares, and presenter travel. Accessibility-related exceptions may apply.
- Funding will not be provided for printed or branded uniforms or merchandise.
- Projects must be accessible to, and provide a clear benefit for, Knox residents. Applications that are not open to the wider Knox community will only be considered where a significant community benefit can be clearly demonstrated.
- Equipment insurance or storage fees.

Minor Grant Assessment Process

All Minor Grant Applications will first be reviewed by Council Officers for eligibility outlined in these Guidelines and the Grant Framework Policy and recommended to Council based on the following criteria:

- Does the application provide adequate benefit to Knox residents - 20%;
- Has the applicant demonstrated community or organisational need, including the organisation's need for funding to deliver the proposed project or activity? (20%);
- Is the application aligned to at least one of the themes outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan - 20%;
- Is the budget realistic - 20%; and
- Is it evident that the organisation has capacity to deliver the project - 20%.

Crisis Response Provision for Minor Grants

In the event of a declared emergency or exceptional circumstance, such as a natural disaster or pandemic impacting the municipality, Council or it's delegate may waive specific clauses in this document to enable appropriate support to community organisations.

Budget Allocation

If the Minor Grants Program budget allocation is exhausted before May, the Program will be suspended immediately, and new applications will not be accepted until the beginning of the new financial year.

Community Development Fund

The Community Development Fund (CDF) is an annual grant program that supports activities, projects and programs that benefit the Knox community. It is designed to reflect community priorities and help our community thrive. CDF grants assist not-for-profit organisations to develop, enhance and support their ongoing sustainability in delivering initiatives that make a positive impact in Knox.

Council allocates funding to the CDF program as part of its annual budget. The funding period for this round is November 2026 to November 2027.

Funding Categories and Objectives

Community Development Fund Category	Max Grant	Purpose / Objectives	Requirements
Active Ageing	$2,501 to $5,000	Promote social connection, health, wellbeing, volunteer engagement for over 55's	Applications should provide participation outcomes and encourage intergenerational connections that value the contribution of over 55's in Knox.
Community Strengthening	$2,501 to $15,000	Strengthen Knox community through diverse activities/services	Applications will need to demonstrate significant benefit to Knox residents and include strategies for sustainable delivery (if required) of the project beyond the grant program.
Cultural Celebrations & Community Events	$2,501 to $3,000	Increase awareness/understanding of diverse cultures, enhance social inclusion	Applications should demonstrate collaboration and partnership where possible. A community event usually attracts less than 500 people.
Arts & Events	$2,501 to $15,000	Support community festivals, creative activities	Applications should demonstrate engaging with and showcasing local artists, musicians, theatre performers, etc. To qualify as an eligible event in this category, the event must be open to the wider community and attract more than 500 people.
Environment & Sustainability	$2,501 to $5,000	Projects/purchases supporting environment, sustainability, or environmental groups	Applications will need to demonstrate positive biodiversity and/or sustainability outcomes in alignment with Council strategies.

Community Development Fund Category	Max Grant	Purpose / Objectives	Requirements
Active Communities	$2,501 to $5,000	Capacity building for sport/leisure clubs to promote wellbeing, diversity, inclusion, gender equity	Applications will need to show consideration of diverse communities and contribute to the sustainability of the club.
Small Equipment Grants	$2,501 to $5,000	Small, essential equipment enhancing sustainability	Applications may request equipment that is essential to delivering a specific project or activity. Everyday sporting equipment is not eligible for funding. Items commonly used for regular training or ongoing participation such as balls, bibs, cones or gloves will not be supported. Examples of eligible equipment include defibrillators to improve safety, non-branded marquees, and stackable seating for program delivery.

Community Development Fund Eligibility

Refer to page 5 of Guidelines.

Community Development Fund Process

Applications will be open from **Monday 25 May 2026** and will close at 11.59pm on **Monday 22 June 2026**.

Use Council's link below to access the **Community Development Funding (CDF)** webpage and submit your application through the SmartyGrants Online Portal, found on this page: community-development-funding-grants. All applications must be completed through the SmartyGrants Online Portal.

Applicants are encouraged (but not required) to contact the Grants Team before submitting to confirm their eligibility. The Team can be contacted on 03 9298 8000 or email grants@knox.vic.gov.au.

The administration and management of the grants program is guided by the Grants Framework which can be accessed via Council's website - Grant framework policy.

Please note: The SmartyGrants program will not receive applications beyond the specified closing date and time. Please ensure you allow adequate time in submitting online to anticipate the possibility of last-minute technical challenges.

The 2026-2027 Community Development Fund information sessions, opening and closing dates are shown below, and we encourage you to attend the Grant Information Sessions.

Dates to remember

25 May 2026	9am	Applications Open
22 June 2026	11.59pm	Applications Close
26 October 2026	7.00pm	Council meeting (endorsement of Panel recommendations)
1 November 2026		Funding commences

Applications that may be supported

- Funds for one-off projects, activities, or equipment purchases that benefit Knox residents.
- Applications that support groups to minimise waste or adapt to climate change.
- Grant funds must be expended within twelve (12) months of receipt, or by the project or activity end date nominated by the applicant in their application, whichever occurs first.
- Clear project goals, defined outcomes, and a detailed plan and budget.
- Support Council's strategic objectives and priorities in the Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.
- Community need must be demonstrated and addressed.
- Collaboration with other local organisations, shared resources, and volunteer involvement encouraged.
- Have no overdue grant acquittals and have successfully acquitted previous grants received.
- Applicants must have no outstanding debts owing to Council. This will be verified by Council as part of the application assessment process.
- Complete applications with all requested attachments and 2 quotes for all costs.
- The organisation must have no active breaches with Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), or the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), as confirmed through publicly available registers or self-declaration.

- Conflict of interest Committee members or their businesses benefiting from grant funds must be disclosed; any quotes or work from a Committee member's business should be reported.
- Short-term wages may be funded where staffing is essential to delivering the project or activity, provided wages do not exceed relevant award rates, enterprise agreements, or recognised industry pay standards.
- You can only include catering costs up to 20% of the amount you apply for. If Council gives you less than you requested, the amount allowed for catering will be adjusted accordingly.

Applications that won't be supported

- Applications submitted after the closing date.
- Activities that take place in a private residence.
- More appropriately funded under another Council grant program.
- Funding will not be provided for the same or substantially similar activity from any Knox Grants Program stream or other Council funding source in either the current or previous financial year.
- Applications where funding will be used to provide grants to a third party.
- Projects must be accessible to, and provide a clear benefit for, Knox residents. Applications that are not open to the wider Knox community will only be considered where a significant community benefit can be clearly demonstrated.
- Retrospective payments or expenses for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval.
- Camps that include overnight stays.
- Operating expenses – salaries, insurance, utilities, cleaning, general maintenance, subscriptions, annual software licences, website or social media maintenance fees, professional grant writer fees.
- Everyday sporting equipment is not supported.
- Funding for prizes, fundraising, competitions, sponsorships, donations, trophies, tobacco, gambling or gifts, e-cigarettes and fireworks
- Transport costs for participants are not supported. This includes bus hire, public transport fares, and presenter travel. Accessibility-related exceptions may apply.
- Funding will not be provided for printed or branded uniforms or merchandise.
- Equipment insurance or storage fees.

Community Development Fund Application and Assessment Process

The annual Community Development Fund submission round will be widely publicised and promoted to the Knox community.

All applications are to be submitted via the Knox City Council SmartyGrants Online Portal and must include:

- Your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency;
- Your most recent full year financials;
- Quotes to support the proposed expenses/budget;
- Evidence of your organisation's legal status; and
- Project Plan and Risk Assessment.

How are Community Development Fund applications assessed?

Applications are first checked for eligibility by Council Officers then evaluated by the Community Grant Assessment Panel, which consists of Community Representatives and Council Officers.

The assessment is conducted in accordance with the Community Grants Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.

All Community Development Fund applications are assessed on the following weighted criteria:

- Clear demonstration of community need and proposed project objectives – 30%;
- The capacity of the organisation applying for the grant to deliver the project and manage the grant – 25%;
- The degree to which the project is shown to have a clear financial need, is feasible and financially viable – 20%;
- The level of benefit to Knox residents – 15%; and
- Demonstration of consultation and partnership with others – 10%.

In addition, expert advice is gathered from relevant Council Officers who provide subject matter expertise on specific submissions. This Officer advice is presented to the Assessment Panel as an additional resource to assist in their thorough review and consideration of each application.

A report is then presented to Council, summarising the recommendations from the Community Grant Assessment Panel. Council will then consider and endorse these recommendations.

Community Partnership Fund

The Community Partnership Fund (CPF) supports community organisations to deliver services and activities that benefit Knox residents and align with Council's strategic objectives under the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029. The funding

will be provided across four financial years, spanning from 1 January 2027 to 30 June 2030.

Following a review of the CPF program in 2025, the funding structure has been streamlined from six streams to three. The first cycle commencing in January 2027.

Organisations that are receiving funding through a Service Agreement will not be eligible to apply for CPF grants during the same funding period for all projects and programs that relate to their core business.

Program Purpose and Who Can Apply

The Program provides funding to not-for-profit organisations to support eligible operational costs that deliver measurable community outcomes aligned with local priorities and identified strategic service needs. Funding is delivered through three distinct streams, and organisations must apply under the stream that best reflects their service type and intended outcomes.

Dates to remember

25 May 2026	9am	Applications Open
22 June 2026	11.59pm	Applications Close
26 October 2026	7.00pm	Council meeting (endorsement of Panel recommendations)
1 January 2027		Funding commences

Community Partnership Fund Eligibility

Refer to page 5 of Guidelines.

Community Partnership Fund Process

Applications for the 2027-30 period will be open from **Monday 25 May 2026** and will close at **11.59pm** on **Monday 22 June, 2026.**

Use Council's link below to access the **Community Partnership Funding (CPF)** webpage and submit your application through the SmartyGrants Online Portal, found on this page: community-partnership-funding-grants.

Applicants are encouraged (but not required) to contact the Grants Team before submitting to confirm their eligibility. The Team can be contacted on 03 9298 8000 or email grants@knox.vic.gov.au.

The administration and management of the grants program is guided by the CPF Grants Framework which can be accessed via Council's website - Community grants framework policy.

Please note: The SmartyGrants program will not receive applications beyond the specified closing date and time. Please ensure you allow adequate time in submitting online to anticipate the possibility of last-minute technical challenges.

Applications that may be supported

- Align with the key directions of the Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-29.
- Align with the purpose and requirements of this grant stream.
- Include current public liability insurance with an appropriate level of cover and a copy of your Certificate of Currency.
- Provide quotes for each item or service to be funded.
- Be submitted by the due date.
- Be located in Knox.
- Have no overdue grant reports or debts with Council.
- Have no active breaches against the obligations of Consumer Affairs Victoria, the Australian Not-for- Profit and Charities Commission, or the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, as applicable.
- Be legally constituted (e.g. incorporated association, company limited by guarantee, Aboriginal Corporation, Statutory Authority, or a Church established by legislation). Evidence of legal status must be provided.
- Be not-for-profit and managed by a volunteer board/committee of management; and provide evidence of your last annual report or AGM minutes complying with Consumer Affairs Victoria, Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, or Australian Securities and Investments Commission obligations.
- Be financially sustainable and able to operate for the full funding period with support from the grant and provide your organisations latest financial statement complying with Consumer Affairs Victoria, Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, or Australian Securities and Investments Commission obligations.

Applications that won't be supported

- Applications that are more appropriately funded under another Council grant program.
- Funding for prizes, sponsorships, donations, trophies, vouchers, tobacco, gambling or gifts, e-cigarettes and fireworks.
- Applications submitted after the closing date.

- Applications where funding will be used to provide grants to a third party.
- Funding for prizes, fundraising, competitions, sponsorships, donations, trophies, tobacco, gambling or gifts, e-cigarettes and fireworks
- Transport costs for participants are not supported. This includes bus hire, public transport fares, and presenter travel. Accessibility-related exceptions may apply.
- Funding will not be provided for printed or branded uniforms or merchandise.
- Equipment insurance or storage fees.
- Projects must be accessible to, and provide a clear benefit for, Knox residents. Applications that are not open to the wider Knox community will only be considered where a significant community benefit can be clearly demonstrated.
- Retrospective payments or expenses for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval.

Community Partnership Fund Application and Assessment Process

The Community Partnership Fund submission round will be widely publicised and promoted to the Knox community.

All applications are to be submitted via the Knox City Council SmartyGrants Online Portal and must include:

- Your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency;
- Your most recent full year financials;
- Quotes to support the proposed expenses/budget;
- Evidence of your organisation's legal status; and
- Project Plan and Risk Assessment.

Applications are first checked for eligibility by Council Officers then evaluated by the Community Grants Assessment Panel, which consists of approved Community Representatives, with support from Council Officers. The assessment is conducted in accordance with the Community Grants Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.

All Community Partnership Fund applications are assessed on the following weighted criteria:

- Relevance to specified funding stream objectives (30%);
- Scope of service delivery (accessibility for residents across Knox) (10%);
- Organisational capacity (demonstrated ability and experience) (25%);
- Clarity of proposed funding expenditure (evidence of realistic budget planning for funding period) (25%); and
- Opportunities to strengthen effective partnership and collaboration (10%).

A report is then presented to Council, summarising the recommendations from the Community Grant Assessment Panel. Council will then consider and endorse these recommendations.

Funding Streams

Applicants must request funding above $15,001, with each stream able to award up to $150,149.50. As funding commences January 2027 this will be pro-rated (6 months) for the 2026-2027 financial year. Grant requests must be financially realistic and full amounts may not be awarded. Final allocations will vary between streams and will be based on assessment outcomes.

1. Specialist Community Support Services

For organisations delivering essential community support services, or those providing specialised support for specific population groups such as older people, young people, children and families, First Nations communities, and culturally diverse communities.

This stream supports organisations to:

- Deliver essential services and support to Knox residents
- Address identified service gaps
- Enhance existing services
- Improve equitable access

Examples

Financial, legal and crisis assistance; housing support; mental health programs; family violence support; addiction support (alcohol, gambling, etc.); and food security initiatives.

2. Community Development

For organisations delivering programs that foster social connection, inclusion, participation, resilience and capacity building.

This stream supports organisations to:

- Promote equal opportunities for participation
- Focus on primary prevention and early intervention
- Strengthen partnerships and community connections
- Build organisational or community capacity
- Improve access to programs and facilities

Examples

2. Community Development
Neighbourhood and community connection activities; community arts or cultural participation projects; peer support or social inclusion groups; youth or intergenerational programs; skills building workshops; community education sessions; and organisational capacity building projects (e.g., governance or planning support).

3. Volunteer Resourcing and Support
For organisations that strengthen the coordination, support, and development of volunteering in Knox. This stream supports organisations to: • Connect residents with meaningful volunteering opportunities • Promote the value and benefits of volunteering • Equip organisations to support, manage and retain volunteers • Facilitate networking and information sharing across volunteer engaging organisations **Examples** Volunteer recruitment and onboarding programs; training and development for volunteers; volunteer management tools or systems; volunteer recognition initiatives; networking or information sharing events; or resources that help organisations create safe, supportive volunteer environments.

Funding Agreements

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Knox City Council outlining the terms and conditions of the funding and the accountability requirements associated with the use of public funds. Funding Agreements are issued for a maximum period of four years, based on the agreed funding objectives. Program meetings will be held twice a year with the Community Grants Team to ensure the organisation is meeting its service objectives and delivering the outcomes funded through the program.

Successful applicants must also notify Council of any significant organisational changes (e.g. governance or financial changes) that may affect their ability to meet the Funding Agreement objectives or deliver agreed service priorities.

Payment of Grants

Grant funds will be paid via electronic funds transfer (EFT) to the funded organisation.

Payments will be made according to the timeframes set out in the individual Funding Agreement and are subject to the submission of required acquittal documentation and reporting.

Where an applicant is registered for GST, GST will not be paid for any part of a grant for salary or project management costs.

Where an applicant is registered for GST, GST will be paid for grants for equipment and other items that attract GST.

GST will not be included as part of a grant to entities not registered for GST (though non-GST registered entities may still apply for Council grants depending on the individual grant guidelines).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Information collected by funded organisations throughout the funding period will be used to assist Council to monitor trends relating to community need and service delivery.

Council will undertake regular monitoring with funded organisations during the funded period to include assessment of:

- Achievement of annual work plan objectives for which the Council funding was allocated;
- Proper acquittal and use of Council funds by the recipient;
- Achievement of obligations contained within the Funding Agreement;
- Identification of opportunities for project collaboration; and
- Any other matter considered relevant.

A full strategic review will be undertaken by Council within the final year of the Funding Agreement period and will include an assessment of:

- The continuing benefit of the service/activity to the Knox community;
- Whether the service/activity continues to be a priority of Council including alignment with Council's policies, strategies and vision; and
- Any other matter considered relevant.

Recognition of Council Funding

Recipients of funding from this program are expected to acknowledge Council's contribution and support through one or more of the following means:

- Use of the Council logo on relevant promotional material;
- Recognition in annual reports and at relevant events, launches and other public activities; and

- Invitation of the Mayor and Councillors to attend relevant events, activities and/or project milestones.

Specific instructions regarding the use of Council's logo will be included in the Funding Agreement. Recipients will be required to provide evidence of this acknowledgement as part of their grant acquittal.

Acquittals

What is an acquittal?

An acquittal is a report that the successful grant applicant submits, showing how the grant was spent and the outcomes of the funded activity. This report helps confirms that the funding was used as intended.

The submission of a satisfactory acquittal within the agreed timeframe is mandatory. If the acquittal report is incomplete, missing, or does not include the required documentation, it may affect your organisation's eligibility to apply for future Knox City Council grants.

Why is an acquittal important?

An acquittal is an important part of the grants process, as it ensures public funds are used responsibly and in line with the Funding Agreement and Grant Program Guidelines.

Applicants must provide evidence of purchases and confirm that all funds were spent on approved items.

As with the financial acquittal, failure to report on project outcomes may result in the applicant being ineligible for future funding. Any unreported or unspent funds must be returned to Council.

If funds are not used in accordance with the agreement with Knox Council, applicants will be required to return the funds.

Funds will also be required to be returned if the spending is found to be retrospective.

Timeline for Grant Acquittals

- **Minor Grants:** Acquittals will be due 2 weeks after the end date of the project / activity.
- **Community Development Fund Program Grants (CDF):** Acquittals will be due 2 weeks after the end date of the project / activity.
- **Community Partnership Fund Program Grants (CPF):** Acquittals will be due each year for the previous year.

Tips for a successful acquittal

- Complete and submit the acquittal online using the SmartyGrants Online Portal.
- Submit the acquittal within two weeks of completing your project or activity.
- Upload evidence of acknowledgement of Council funding.
- Include receipts or other proof of payment equal to the value of the grant. Documents must clearly show that the amounts have been paid in full, for example marked as “paid” or showing a zero balance (quotes or unpaid invoices are not sufficient).
- Attach photos or videos of your project/event.
- Provide a summary outlining the benefits and outcomes of the project for the community.
- If required return any unspent grant funds to Council.

Definitions

Acquittal	Means the information provided by the grant recipient that proves that funds have been spent responsibly and in line with the guidelines of each grant program.
Assessment Panel	A specific purpose committee to provide recommendations to Council on the Community Development Fund grant allocations.
Auspice	An established not-for-profit legal entity that agrees to take responsibility for the grant obligations of an unincorporated or informal or newly established group with no legal status.
Chief Executive Officer	Means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
Community Group/Organisation	Means a legal entity which provides services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Community Representative	A member of the community appointed by Council to participate in the Panel Assessments.
Council	Means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of these Guidelines.
Delegate(s)	Means a Council Officer selected by the Chief Executive Officer to administer the Grant Programs.
Event	Means an event, celebration, conference, performance or exhibition open to the community and held within the boundaries of Knox City.
Funding Agreement	Means an agreement between the grant recipient and Council that documents the agreed objectives of the grant and the accountability requirements of the grant.
Grant	Means a sum of money given to an organisation with the expectation that the money will be used for an agreed and specific purpose.
GST	Goods and Services Tax.
Individual	Means a person who lives, works, studies, or has a demonstrated connection to the Knox municipality.

Legal Entity	An incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State or Commonwealth.
Not-for-Profit Group	A group or organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members and any profit or surplus is directed back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purpose.
Capital Works & Fixed Asset	Capital works and the purchase or installation of fixed assets are not eligible for funding under this grant program. This includes any works or items that create, enhance, or extend the life of a physical asset or infrastructure. Capital works generally refer to construction, structural improvements, or permanent upgrades to land, buildings, or facilities. Fixed assets are items of enduring value that are not easily moved and are intended for long-term use. Examples of ineligible capital works and fixed assets include (but are not limited to): • Construction of new buildings, extensions, or permanent structures • Renovations, refurbishments, or upgrades to existing facilities (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, clubrooms) • Installation or replacement of fixed equipment (e.g built-in seating, lighting infrastructure) • Purchase of large or fixed equipment that becomes part of a facility (e.g. scoreboards, fixed shelving, commercial kitchen fit-outs)

References

Knox City Council Plans

Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Bill 2021

Charter of Human Rights

These Guidelines have been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

Related Council Policy

- Council Grant Framework Policy (April 2025)
- Election Period Policy
- Electronic Gaming Machine Policy
- Complaint Policy
- Knox City Council Governance Rule (Chapter 5 Conflicts of Interest)
- Fraud and Corruption Control Framework
- Child Safe Policy

Related Council Documents

- Knox City Council Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure
- Community Grant Assessment Panel Terms of Reference
- Community Events in Knox – Information Pack

8.5 Knox Emergency Relief Fund Grants

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Coordinator Community Partnerships and Inclusion, Steph Ashby
Manager: Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
Executive: Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

SUMMARY
This report presents the preliminary outcomes of the 2025-2026 Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) and seeks Council's direction for the delivery of the Fund in 2026-2027.

The ERF was established in 2025-2026 to provide responsive funding to organisations supporting Knox residents experiencing hardship and financial distress. During its inaugural year, a mid-point review found that the Fund had supported the delivery of essential relief including food, bedding, vouchers, transport assistance, and other emergency relief items. The Fund was fully allocated by November 2025, demonstrating strong community demand.

Council has allocated $150,000 for the Emergency Relief Fund in 2026-2027. This is ongoing funding for future budgets.

Following a review of the inaugural Program, Officers have developed proposed ERF Guidelines for 2026-2027. The Guidelines include a reduced annual funding cap of $10,000 per organisation, clearer eligibility and assessment criteria, and stronger alignment with the Knox Emergency Relief Network (KERN).

Officers, responding to community need, did explore opportunities to fund a homelessness outreach program via the ERF, in response to local service gaps and increasing demand for support for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. This included consideration of a targeted outreach pilot to improve connections to housing, emergency relief and specialist support services however it is recommended that opportunities to support homelessness outreach will be explored separately through alternative funding sources, partnerships and advocacy.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:
1. Approve the Knox Emergency Relief Guidelines 2026-2027.
2. Request Officers to explore alternative funding options to support homelessness outreach activities.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Background

The Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) was introduced in 2025-2026 as a responsive funding program to assist organisations supporting Knox residents experiencing hardship and financial distress.

The Fund was established in recognition of increasing cost-of-living pressures and growing demand for emergency relief services across the municipality. In comparison to Council's broader grant

programs, the ERF was designed to provide timely support for organisations responding to immediate and emerging community needs.

The Fund enabled eligible organisations to seek funding throughout the year for essential relief items and services, allowing Council to respond quickly to changing community circumstances.

1.2 2025-2026 Emergency Relief Fund Outcomes

The 2025-2026 ERF had a total allocation of $100,000. The Fund operated for the financial year or until the available funding was exhausted, whichever occurred first. A total of 12 applications were received, with seven applications funded through the Program. Three applications were withdrawn and two were ineligible. The final application was approved in November 2025, at which point the full funding allocation had been committed.

The funded organisations delivered a range of emergency relief responses to support Knox residents experiencing financial hardship and disadvantages. Funding was used to provide emergency food relief, essential household items, bedding, personal hygiene products, and other forms of practical assistance for Knox residents experiencing hardship. Funded organisations included:

Organisation	Project	Funding
The Salvation Army	The Pantry (Extended Food Relief)	$18,181.82
Foothills Community Care Inc.	Foothills Community Casseroles	$18,181.82
Knox Infolink Inc.	Knox Infolink Emergency Relief Program	$17,559.09
Temple Society Australia	Access to Nutritional Food for All	$10,909.09
Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc.	Emergency Bedding and Other Manchester	$5,454.55
Feed One Feed All Inc.	Reducing Food Insecurity for Families in Knox, Yarra Ranges and Maroondah	$18,181.82
Restore Community Care	Filling Plates, Filling Hearts	$11,531.81
Total Funding Allocated		**$100,000.00**

A mid-point evaluation undertaken in March 2026 demonstrated good progress across funded projects, with organisations reporting that the funding had enabled them to respond to increasing demand for food relief, household essentials and support for people experiencing financial hardship, homelessness and crisis. Reported outcomes included:

- Approximately 500 people supported through The Salvation Army pantry service during the funding period;
- Approximately 3,000 people supported through the Eastern Emergency Relief Network's provision of food and essential household items for people transitioning into housing;
- Ongoing food and toiletry support provided through Restore Community Care for individuals and families experiencing financial hardship; and
- Practical emergency relief provided through Knox Infolink, Foothills Community Care, Feed One Feed All and Temple Society Australia.

Feedback from funded organisations highlighted the significant positive impact of ERF on community members experiencing hardship. Organisations reported that emergency relief funding reduced financial stress, improved access to food and essential items, supported people

transitioning into housing and enabled vulnerable residents to redirect limited income towards rent, utilities, medication and other critical expenses.

One organisation reported supporting a young family experiencing homelessness following a workplace injury and extended financial hardship. Through emergency food relief, practical assistance and referrals to support services, the family was able to secure stable housing and has since returned as volunteers to assist others experiencing similar challenges.

Another recipient reported that clients accessing emergency food and hygiene products described feeling “seen and heard” and appreciated being treated with dignity during a period of significant personal hardship.

No delivery issues were reported through the mid-point evaluation, with funded organisations progressing as planned and continuing to provide essential support to Knox residents.

Final outcomes are not yet available due to the seven funded projects commencing and concluding at different times; recipients had three months from their individual project completion date to submit their acquittal. As a result, acquittal due dates range from October 2026 to February 2027, with the final acquittal due on 22 February 2027.

A final evaluation will be undertaken once all acquittals have been received and assessed, with the outcomes to be reported to Council.

1.3 Review of the Program

Following the first year of delivery, Officers reviewed the operation of ERF, feedback from emergency relief providers and key stakeholders, and emerging community needs.

The review confirmed that ERF successfully achieved its objective of providing a responsive funding source for emergency relief providers. Demand for funding was high, with the full $100,000 allocation exhausted in the first half of the financial year.

Opportunities for improvement were identified, including:

- Reducing the maximum funding amount available to any one organisation to enable a greater number of organisations to access support;
- Creating clearer assessment criteria to better prioritise community demand and urgency;
- Providing greater clarity regarding eligible and ineligible expenditure;
- Ensuring funding is directed toward immediate relief and support for community members experiencing hardship, rather than broader organisational or infrastructure costs;
- Strengthening alignment with the Knox Emergency Relief Network to support a coordinated local response to emerging community need; and
- Introducing clearer expectations regarding project delivery timeframes to ensure funding remains responsive and is expended in a timely manner.

In response to these findings, the proposed ERF Guidelines have been clarified to focus the ERF specifically on emergency food relief for Knox residents experiencing hardship. Funding will support the purchase and distribution of food and other directly related emergency food-relief items. Organisational infrastructure, equipment and fixed assets - including fridges, freezers and

storage equipment - will not be funded. This approach will ensure that the available funding is directed to immediate community needs and can assist as many residents as possible.

These learnings have informed the development of the proposed Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines 2026-2027 (see Attachment 1).

1.4 Homelessness Outreach Considerations

Like many municipalities across Victoria, Knox has experienced increasing homelessness, housing stress and rough sleeping in recent years. The number of people experiencing homelessness in Knox increased from 365 in 2016 to 427 in 2021, an increase of approximately 17 per cent, according to the ABS Census. Across Victoria, homelessness increased by approximately 24 per cent over the same period, with outer metropolitan areas experiencing some of the fastest growth.

Council's local data also indicates increasing reports of rough sleeping. In 2025-2026, Council received 127 non-duplicate rough-sleeping notifications, compared with 98 in 2024-2025 and 119 in 2023-2024. This represents an increase of approximately 30 per cent over the past year. These notifications do not represent a complete count of people sleeping rough.

Rising housing costs, limited affordable and social housing, cost-of-living pressures and increasing demand for specialist homelessness services continue to place significant pressure on the Knox community. These pressures disproportionately affect people on low incomes, women and children escaping family violence, young people, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people living with complex needs.

The opportunity to strengthen the local homelessness response was identified through Council's engagement with local service providers, including at the Homelessness Roundtable held in June 2026. At the Roundtable and through anecdotal conversations with service providers, several themes were highlighted for Knox including increasing local demand for homelessness support, gaps in local outreach capacity and difficulties connecting people experiencing homelessness with appropriate housing and support services.

The Salvation Army will resume a limited outreach service in Knox from July 2026. Feedback from local service providers indicates that this level of service is unlikely to meet current local demand, particularly for people who are sleeping rough or disconnected from existing services.

Assertive outreach involves trained workers proactively approaching and building relationships with people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, rather than waiting for them to seek assistance. It is generally delivered through repeated, relationship-based engagement and supports people to access housing, emergency relief, health services and other specialist supports.

In response to the needs identified through the Homelessness Roundtable and broader stakeholder engagement, Officers explored a one-year Homelessness Outreach Program pilot. The model considered would support a specialist organisation to deliver assertive outreach, service navigation, referrals and coordinated support for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness within Knox.

Whilst there is merit in the ERF funding a component of the homelessness outreach program, following consideration and feedback, Officers are recommending that the full ERF budget of $150,000 be allocated to the Emergency Relief Fund. Opportunities to support homelessness outreach will be explored separately through alternative funding sources, partnerships and advocacy.

The work undertaken to explore an outreach model has identified opportunities to strengthen local service connections and support people who may face barriers to accessing established services. Officers will build on this work by exploring alternative funding sources and partnerships.

Council will continue its advocacy and partnership work to seek increased and sustainable homelessness services in Knox.

1.5 Proposed Emergency Relief Fund 2026-2027

The Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines 2026-2027 (Attachment 1) retain the core purpose of the Fund while updating selected elements in response to the evaluation of the 2025-2026 Program.

The $150,000 allocated for 2026-2027 is proposed to be made available through the Emergency Relief Fund. This will maximise the funding available for emergency food relief and support a broader range of organisations responding to community need.

Table 1 summarises the differences between the 2025-2026 Guidelines and the proposed Guidelines for 2026-2027.

Table 1: Summary of Proposed Changes

Previous Guidelines (2025-2026)	Proposed Guidelines (2026-2027)
Emergency Relief Fund ($100,000)	Emergency Relief Fund ($150,000)
Maximum of $20,000 per organisation	Maximum ERF allocation reduced to $10,000 per organisation per financial year
Broad eligibility and expenditure guidance	ERF applicants must be members of Knox Emergency Relief Network (current membership: 27)
	Clearer eligible and ineligible expenditure to improve consistency and transparency
Limited assessment criteria	Updated assessment criteria focusing on community need and benefit
Projects delivered over 12 months	Project delivery reduced to 5 months to increase responsiveness
Acquittals due within three months of project completion	Acquittals due within two weeks of project completion
Monthly ERF assessment process	Monthly ERF assessments retained

Further detail on the proposed changes is provided below.

1.5.1 Emergency Relief Fund

The $150,000 would be allocated to the Emergency Relief Fund. The following changes to the ERF are proposed:

- Reducing the maximum allocation from $20,000 to $10,000 per organisation per financial year. In 2025-2026, the full $100,000 allocation was exhausted within approximately four months. The reduced cap is intended to distribute funding across a greater number of organisations and community needs.
- Encouraging organisations to collaborate where an identified need requires resources beyond the $10,000 annual cap (for example, three different organisations could apply for a shared project up to $30,000).
- Requiring applicants to ERF to be members of the Knox Emergency Relief Network to strengthen coordination between local emergency relief providers.
- Providing clearer eligibility, assessment and reporting requirements.
- Expanding guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure to improve the transparency and consistency of funding decisions.
- Introducing assessment criteria that place greater emphasis on demonstrated community need, urgency, community benefit, organisational capacity and value for money.
- Reducing the expected project delivery period from 12 months to five months to ensure funding remains responsive to immediate and emerging community needs.
- For the 2026-2027 Emergency Relief Fund, the acquittal timeframe has been reduced, with funded organisations required to submit their acquittal within two weeks of their project completion date.
- ERF applications would continue to be accepted through an open application process and assessed monthly, with recommendations presented to Council for determination, until the budget allocation is exhausted.

1.5.2 Exploration of Alternative Funding for Homelessness Outreach

Officers will explore opportunities to support homelessness outreach through alternative funding sources, partnerships and advocacy. This may include consideration through surplus funds from other grant streams, as well as external grants and opportunities to strengthen existing service provision.

This work will build on the needs identified through the Homelessness Roundtable and ongoing engagement with local service providers. Any proposed funding arrangement or delivery model will be considered through the relevant assessment and approval processes.

1.6 Implementation and Assessment Process

Subject to Council endorsement of the Guidelines, the Emergency Relief Fund will open following Council endorsement and continue to operate through monthly funding rounds until the annual allocation is exhausted. Eligible organisations may apply throughout the year, with applications assessed monthly by Council Officers and recommendations presented to the next available Council Meeting for determination. This approach enables Council to respond to emerging community need in a timely and responsive manner.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The Guidelines have been informed by:

- Review of the 2025-2026 Emergency Relief Fund;
- Feedback from organisations involved in the delivery of emergency relief services;
- Internal consultation with relevant Council Officers and key stakeholders; and
- A mid-point evaluation survey completed by Emergency Relief Fund recipients during 2025-2026.

The mid-point evaluation survey sought feedback from funded organisations regarding project delivery, expenditure, outcomes achieved and any barriers to implementation. The findings from this survey, together with anecdotal feedback from emergency relief providers and KERN members, have informed the proposed refinements to the 2026-2027 Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines.

Once the Guidelines are approved, the Emergency Relief Fund will be promoted through Council's grants communication channels and directly to eligible emergency relief providers who are members of KERN. Officers will attend the KERN meeting on 27 October 2026 to further promote the funding and answer any questions.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines support organisations providing direct assistance to people in the Knox community experiencing hardship and financial distress.

The ERF contributes to community wellbeing by improving access to food, essential household items, emergency support services and other forms of assistance that help people meet immediate needs.

The ERF particularly benefits people experiencing disadvantage, including people experiencing homelessness, financial hardship, family violence, social isolation and other forms of disadvantage.

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

Where appropriate, funded organisations may be encouraged to consider environmentally sustainable purchasing practices when procuring goods and supplies through the Fund.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines includes a total funding allocation of $150,000 for 2026-2027, as per Council budget approval for 2026-2027.

Alternative funding sources and partnership opportunities for homelessness outreach will be explored separately. Any future funding proposal will be subject to the relevant assessment and approval processes.

The Fund and exploration of alternative funding options will be administered within existing Community Partnerships and Inclusion team resources. The proposed funding allocation reflects ongoing demand for emergency relief assistance and Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable residents experiencing hardship.

7. RISKS

Risks associated with the Fund are managed through the proposed Guidelines, Funding Agreements, acquittal requirements and Council's Grant Framework. These measures support transparent decision-making, accountability and appropriate use of public funds.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

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 2.3 - 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.

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. FINAL Attachment 1 - DRAFT Final Knox Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines 2026-27 - CM - 2026-10-26 A [**8.5.1** - 16 pages]

Knox City Council

Attachment 1

DRAFT

Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines 2026 - 2027



Image Credit: Outer East Foodshare

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1. Introduction

Knox City Council provides an annual budget to a range of grant programs designed to capture the priorities of the community and enable our community to thrive. They are underpinned by the following principles:

- Funded projects/activities will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council's objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups is encouraged;
- Grants' processes will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- Grants' processes will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

These Guidelines outline the Emergency Relief Fund, which provides funding to respond to different community needs through an open grant application process.

Equity and Inclusion

Council is committed to equity and inclusion and welcomes applications from groups that may experience disadvantages or barriers to participation. This includes (but is not limited to) First Nations Peoples, LGBTIQA+ communities, over 55's, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disability. We also encourage partnership and collaboration between organisations.

2. Who can apply?

Organisations who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for the Emergency Relief Fund.

Operational location

Applicants must be located within, or be delivering a project within, the City of Knox.

Australian Business Number

The organisation must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or complete a Statement by Supplier form.

Governing Body

The organisation must have a Committee of Management or similar governing body that accepts responsibility for administering the grant.

Previous Grant Expenditure

The organisation must have provided evidence to Council's satisfaction regarding the expenditure of any previous grants received from Council.

No Outstanding Debts

The organisation must have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council.

Not-For-Profit Status

The organisation must be a not-for-profit legal entity that provides services, support, or activities to the Knox community. Grants will only be awarded to eligible organisations and not to individuals.

Public Liability Insurance

The organisation must hold adequate public liability insurance appropriate for the activity outlined in the application.

Required Permits and Plans

All required permits and approvals, including Council permits, must be obtained as part of the funding agreement.

3. General Grant Conditions and Compliance Requirements

The following conditions apply to the Emergency Relief Fund program:

Use of Grant Funds

Once a grant has been approved, grant funds must be used solely for the purpose approved in the grant application and Funding Agreement. Grant funds must not be gifted, transferred or passed on to another organisation, either in cash or through the purchase or transfer of equipment.

Any changes to the approved use of grant funds will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and require prior written approval from Council Officers within the Community Grants Team (delegated Officers) using approved forms.

Prohibited Expenditure and Funding Exclusions

Funding will not be provided for:

- Activities that have already commenced or expenses incurred prior to Council approval (retrospective funding).
- As a general principle, Council funding will not be used to replace services that are the core responsibility of the State or Federal Government.
- Projects, programs or activities delivered by political or religious organisations where the primary purpose is political advocacy, promotion of a political party, or the promotion of religious beliefs, doctrine or worship.
- Organisations or businesses that operate electronic gaming machines or other gambling activities strongly associated with gambling harm. Grant funding will also not support events, activities or programs delivered at venues where electronic gaming machines operate, in accordance with the Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy.
- The purchase of alcohol, or items that support the sale, storage or consumption of alcohol.
- Expenditure that contributes unnecessarily to environmental harm where more sustainable alternatives are reasonably available, including the purchase or use of single-use plastics.
- CCTV, surveillance systems, cameras, monitoring equipment, or associated installation and maintenance costs.

- Educational institution curriculum-based activities or projects that take place solely within, or exclusively benefit, a single school or kindergarten.
- Voucher support other than grocery vouchers. Grocery vouchers must be supermarket-specific (for example, Coles or Woolworths) and must restrict the purchase of alcohol and tobacco products.
- Capital works, building works, permanent infrastructure, or the purchase or installation of fixed assets. This includes any works or items that create, enhance or extend the life of a physical asset or infrastructure. Capital works generally refer to construction, structural improvements or permanent upgrades to land, buildings or facilities. Fixed assets are items of enduring value that are not easily moved and are intended for long-term use.
- Installation or replacement of fixed equipment (for example built-in seating or lighting infrastructure).
- Purchase of large or fixed equipment that becomes part of a facility (for example fixed shelving or commercial kitchen fit-outs).
- Portable equipment such as marquees, tables, chairs, fridges and ovens.

Child Safe Standards

Council is committed to creating a child safe and child friendly city. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to ensuring all children and young people are safe, valued and protected from harm. Child safety is embedded in the everyday work of Council staff, contractors and volunteers.

As a condition of receiving grant funding, organisations must comply with all relevant child safety legislation, including the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme. This includes:

- Reviewing the Worker Screening Act 2020 to understand any Working with Children Check (WWCC) requirements;
- Reviewing the Child Employment (Amendment) Act 2022 to determine whether a licence is required to employ children under 15;
- Implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards, where applicable; and
- Understanding and complying with obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Where an organisation has direct or indirect contact with children under 18 years of age, applications must include evidence of the organisation's commitment to child safety, including:

- Policies and procedures addressing the Child Safe Standards (where applicable); and
- Confirmation that relevant staff and volunteers hold a valid Working with Children Check, where required.

Plain language guides, fact sheets-language guides, fact sheets and other resources are available from the Social Services Regulator: Child Safe Standards | vic.gov.au.

Equity, Inclusion and Respect

Grant recipients are required to demonstrate behaviour that promotes respect, integrity, inclusivity, accountability and responsibility throughout the delivery of the funded project or activity.

Activities should actively foster an inclusive environment for all community members, including culturally and linguistically diverse participants, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.

Compliance with this requirement will be assessed as part of the grant acquittal process. Organisations that fail to uphold these standards may be required to return grant funds to Council and may not be eligible for future grant funding.

Conflict of Interest - Community Group Members

Any individual or related business/organisation benefiting from grant funds must declare this conflict. If work or quotes are supplied by a connected party, it must be reported and supported by a second quote.

Funding Agreement

All successful applicants are required to enter into a funding agreement within two weeks of grant approval. Funding agreements detail the terms and conditions of the grant, accountability requirements for project delivery and financial reporting expectations.

Alignment with the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

All funding applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will benefit the Knox community and align with the objectives and priorities of the Knox Council and Health & Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Applicants must address this requirement through mandatory application questions. Demonstrated alignment will form part of the eligibility screening and assessment criteria. Applications that fail to demonstrate alignment will not be considered for funding.

Change of Circumstances

We understand from time to time, circumstances may change. Please contact the Community Grants Team on grants@knox.vic.gov.au or 03 9298 8000 to discuss your project or program and any foreseeable impacts to the delivery of your project.

Suspension or Withholding of Payments

Council may withhold or suspend funding where reporting is late, incomplete or unsatisfactory; where the Applicant has failed to remedy a breach; or where Council reasonably considers there to be a risk to health, safety, child safety or Council's reputation. Payments resume once issues are remedied.

The Role of an Auspice

An auspice arrangement is when a larger, eligible organisation supports a smaller unincorporated group to apply for and manage a grant. The larger organisation, known as the auspice, is responsible for managing the grant funds and providing public liability insurance for the activity or event. Both the auspice organisation and the group being auspiced must be community groups or organisations. Individuals cannot apply for funding under an auspice arrangement.

If you wish to use an auspice, you must provide evidence of their agreement, usually a letter which should be uploaded with your grant application in SmartyGrants. The auspice organisation must also meet the Eligibility Criteria outlined in the 'Who Can Apply' section of these Guidelines.

4. Emergency Relief Fund Specific Requirements

Purpose

The Emergency Relief Fund supports local service providers operating within Knox or delivering services to Knox residents to provide immediate and essential assistance to people experiencing hardship or crisis.

It is intended to be a responsive funding mechanism that enables organisations to meet urgent and immediate community need and replenish essential relief supplies.

The Fund is not intended to duplicate other Knox City Council grant programs and will generally support urgent or emerging needs that cannot reasonably wait for another funding round.

Examples of eligible support include:

- Food and groceries;
- Bedding and blankets;
- Clothing;
- Vouchers;
- Medicine and health-related essentials; and
- Other initiatives that address immediate community need.

Funding available

- Total annual funding pool: $150,000.
- Organisations may apply multiple times throughout the financial year. The total funding awarded to any one organisation cannot exceed $10,000 per financial year.
- Funding requests can be made for any amount up to $10,000.
- Applicants are encouraged to collaborate and partner where an identified need requires resources beyond the $10,000 annual cap (for example, 3 different organisations may apply for a shared project up to $30,000).
- Applicants are encouraged to request only the amount required to meet the identified need and are not expected to apply for the maximum amount.
- The organisation must be a member of the Knox Emergency Relief Network (KERN). Information on KERN is available on the Knox City Council website: Knox Emergency Relief Network | Knox.

Assessment and Decision-Making

Applications are assessed and allocated monthly. The Emergency Relief Fund and any allocation and payment of Grants will be temporarily suspended prior to any Council election or by-election, in accordance with Council's Election Period Policy.

Application Amount	Assessment and Determination	Grant Accountability and Acquittal
$1 to $10,000	Assessed by the Director Connected Communities or Manager Community Strengthening. Determined by Council at the monthly Ordinary Meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement and Acquittal required that show proof of expenditure/ purchase (i.e. receipt, paid invoice or bank statement) and benefit of grant.

Applications that may be supported

Projects that assist people in Knox experiencing an immediate crisis or unmet essential needs.

Eligible applications may include:

- The purchase and distribution of essential relief items to people experiencing hardship.
- One-off, short-term initiatives that respond to an identified and immediate community need.
- Projects that can be delivered and funds expended within five months of receiving funding, reflecting the responsive nature of the program.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have no overdue grant acquittals with Knox City Council.
- Have satisfactorily acquitted any previous Knox City Council grants.
- Have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council (to be verified as part of the assessment process).

Examples of eligible items and activities include:

- Food and groceries.
- Bedding and blankets.
- Clothing and personal care items.
- Vouchers for essential goods and services.
- Medicines and other health-related essentials.
- Other initiatives that directly address an immediate community need.

Applications and expenditure that won't be supported

In addition to the general exclusions outlined in Section 3, the Emergency Relief Fund will not support:

- Activities that take place in a private residence.
- Funding requests for individuals.
- Applications that are more appropriately funded under another Council grant program.

- Applications where the funding will be used to provide grants to a third party.
- Retrospective payments or expenses for activities or expenses undertaken before Council approval.
- Operating and core business expenses, including wages and salaries, rent, insurance, utilities, cleaning, general maintenance, subscriptions, annual software licences, website or social media maintenance fees, professional grant writer fees, and other ongoing organisational overheads.
- One-off hospitality, catering or meal events that do not provide an ongoing emergency relief outcome or demonstrate a sustained benefit to people experiencing hardship.
- Infrastructure projects or the purchase of fixed assets, including items such as commercial fridges, freezers, permanent storage infrastructure or facility upgrades.
- Projects must be accessible to, and provide a clear benefit for, Knox residents. Applications that are not open to the wider Knox community will only be considered where a significant community benefit can be clearly demonstrated.
- Projects that don't demonstrate community wellbeing or enhance access and inclusion.
- Projects from applicants whose primary mission does not align with the purpose of this Fund, which is enabling the delivery of immediate and essential relief and support to individuals in need in Knox.
- Fundraising activities.
- New vehicles, vehicle accessories, vehicle signage, or ongoing vehicle maintenance costs.
- Activities that primarily benefit people outside the Knox municipality.

Assessment Process and Criteria

All applications are to be submitted via the Knox City Council SmartyGrants Online Portal and must include:

- Your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency;
- Your most recent full year financials;
- Quotes to support the proposed expenses/budget;
- Evidence of your organisation’s legal status; and
- Project Plan and Risk Assessment.

All Emergency Relief Fund Grant applications will be reviewed by Council Officers for eligibility in accordance with these Guidelines and the Community Grant Framework Policy.

Eligible applications are assessed monthly against the outlined criteria, with preference given to proposals that demonstrate longer-term benefit or ongoing support outcomes. For example, sustainable items or activities that continue to support people over time may be prioritised over one-off activities with limited community impact.

Recommendations are then provided to Council for determination at the next available Ordinary Council Meeting.

Emergency Relief Fund applications are assessed on the following weighted criteria:

- **Community Need and Demand (40%):** Demonstrates a clear current community need, including service demand, waitlists, service pressures, and any recent increases in demand and contributing

factors.

- **Urgency and Responsiveness (30%):** Demonstrates why the support is needed now, the consequences if funding is not provided, and how the request responds to an unmet or emerging community need.
- **Community Benefit (15%):** Demonstrates the direct benefit to Knox residents, including who will benefit and how the funding will assist people experiencing hardship or disadvantage.
- **Organisational Capacity and Budget (15%):** Demonstrates the organisation has the capacity to deliver the proposed activity and that the budget is reasonable, well-structured, and represents value for money.

Application submission deadlines

Grant submission deadline	Council meeting date
23 November 2026	14 December 2026
18 January 2027	8 February 2027
16 February 2027	9 March 2027 (Tues)
22 March 2027	12 April 2027
19 April 2027	10 May 2027

Use Council's link below to access the **Emergency Relief Fund** webpage and submit your application through the SmartyGrants Online Portal, found on this webpage Emergency Relief Fund. All applications must be completed through the SmartyGrants Online Portal.

Please note: The SmartyGrants program will not receive applications beyond the specified closing date and time. Please ensure that you allow adequate time in submitting online to anticipate the possibility of last-minute technical challenges.

Your project/activity start date must be after the Council meeting date where your application is being presented for approval.

Projects/activities that are due to begin before the Council meeting date will not be considered.

We may request extra information about your application so please allow enough time before the monthly deadline. Otherwise, we may defer your application to next month's Council meeting.

The administration and management of the grants program is guided by the Community Grants Framework Policy which can be accessed via Council's website - Community grants framework policy.

Applications must be submitted at least **15 working days** before the Council meeting to allow time for assessment.

Emergency Relief Fund grants will not be awarded during June due to end of financial year processes, or in January, as Council meetings are not held during this period. Applicants will be advised if their application is delayed and assessed as part of the new financial year processes.

Crisis Response Provision

In the event of a declared emergency or exceptional circumstance, such as a natural disaster or pandemic impacting the municipality, Council or its delegate may waive specific clauses in this document to enable appropriate support to community organisations.

Budget Allocation

If the Emergency Relief Fund budget allocation is exhausted before May 2027, the Program will be suspended immediately, and new applications will not be accepted.

5. Application Process

When will I know the outcome of my application?

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email following consideration and approval by Council. Applicants will be advised of the outcome in the days following the relevant Council meeting.

What happens if my application is successful?

Successful applicants will be required to sign a formal funding agreement outlining the details of the grant. This Agreement will clearly define the approved purpose of the funding and set out the terms and conditions to support effective project delivery and ensure public funds are used appropriately.

What happens if my application is unsuccessful?

If you are not successful, we encourage you to talk to the Community Grants Team to seek feedback on your application and make further applications in the future.

Privacy and Data Protection Act

As part of the Information Privacy Act Statement of Consent, Council collects information from grant applicants to register and manage grant applications for the relevant funding period. The information may also be used to provide related updates and to assess satisfaction with Council services. Your information will not be shared except as required by law and will not be disclosed for marketing purposes.

Administrative Updates

From time to time, minor administrative updates may be required to this document. Changes that do not significantly affect the Guidelines can be made administratively and approved by the CEO. Examples include updates to Department or position names, Government Department titles, meeting dates or minor legislative amendments with no substantial impact. Any changes that could materially affect the intent of the Guidelines must be submitted to Council for consideration.

I Need Help

If you are having difficulty applying online, we are here to help. Contact the Community Grants Team on 03 9298 8000 or email: grants@knox.vic.gov.au.

6. Acquittals

What is an acquittal?

An acquittal is a report that the successful grant applicant submits, showing how the grant was spent and the outcomes of the funded activity. This report confirms that the funding was used as intended.

The submission of a satisfactory acquittal within the agreed timeframe is mandatory. If the acquittal report is incomplete, missing, or does not include the required documentation, it may affect your organisation's eligibility to apply for future Knox City Council grants.

Why is an acquittal important?

An acquittal is an important part of the grants process, as it ensures public funds are used responsibly and in line with the Funding Agreement and Grant Program Guidelines.

Applicants must provide evidence of purchases and confirm that all funds were spent on approved items.

If funds are not used in accordance with the agreement with Knox Council, applicants will be required to return the funds. Funds will also be required to be returned if the spending is found to be retrospective.

Timeline for Grant Acquittals

Acquittals will be due two weeks after the end date of the project/activity.

Recognition of Council Funding

Recipients of funding from this Program are expected to acknowledge Council's contribution and support through one or more of the following means:

- Use of the Council logo on relevant promotional material;
- Recognition in annual reports and at relevant events, launches and other public activities; and
- Invitation of the Mayor and Councillors to attend relevant events, activities and/or project milestones.

Specific instructions regarding the use of Council's logo will be included in the Funding Agreement. Recipients will be required to provide evidence of this acknowledgement as part of their grant acquittal.

Tips for a successful acquittal

- Complete and submit the acquittal online using the SmartyGrants Online Portal.
- Submit the acquittal within two weeks of completing your project or activity.
- Upload evidence of acknowledgement of Council funding.
- Include receipts or other proof of payment equal to the value of the grant. Documents must

clearly show that the amounts have been paid in full, for example marked as “paid” or showing a zero balance (quotes or unpaid invoices are not sufficient).

- Attach photos or videos of your project/event.
- Provide a summary outlining the benefits and outcomes of the project for the community.
- If required return any unspent grant funds to Council.

7. Definitions

Acquittal	Means the information provided by the grant recipient that proves that funds have been spent responsibly and in line with the guidelines of each grant program.
Assessment Panel	A specific purpose committee to provide recommendations to Council on the Emergency Relief Fund program grant allocations.
Auspice	An established not-for-profit legal entity that agrees to take responsibility for the grant obligations of an unincorporated or informal or newly established group with no legal status.
Chief Executive Officer	Means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
Community Group/Organisation	Means a legal entity which provides services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Community Representative	A member of the community appointed by Council to participate in the Panel Assessments.
Council	Means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of these Guidelines.
Delegate(s)	Means a Council Officer selected by the Chief Executive Officer to administer the Grant Program.
Event	Means an event, celebration, conference, performance or exhibition open to the community and held within the boundaries of the Knox municipality.
Funding Agreement	Means an agreement between the grant recipient and Council that documents the agreed objectives of the grant and the accountability requirements of the grant.
Grant	Means a sum of money given to an organisation with the expectation that the money will be used for an agreed and specific purpose.
GST	Goods and Services Tax.

Individual	Means a person who lives, works, studies, or has a demonstrated connection to the Knox municipality.
Legal Entity	An incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State or Commonwealth.
Not-for-Profit Group	A group or organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members and any profit or surplus is directed back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purpose.
Capital Works & Fixed Asset	Capital works and the purchase or installation of fixed assets are not eligible for funding under this grant program. This includes any works or items that create, enhance, or extend the life of a physical asset or infrastructure. Capital works generally refer to construction, structural improvements, or permanent upgrades to land, buildings, or facilities. Fixed assets are items of enduring value that are not easily moved and are intended for long-term use. Examples of ineligible capital works and fixed assets include (but are not limited to): • Construction of new buildings, extensions, or permanent structures; • Renovations, refurbishments, or upgrades to existing facilities (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, clubrooms); • Installation or replacement of fixed equipment (e.g. built-in seating, lighting infrastructure); and Purchase of large or fixed equipment that becomes part of a facility (e.g. scoreboards, fixed shelving, commercial kitchen fit-outs).

8. References

Knox City Council Plans

Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Bill 2021

Charter of Human Rights

These Guidelines have been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

Related Council Policy

- Council Grant Framework Policy (April 2025)
- Election Period Policy
- Electronic Gaming Machine Policy
- Complaint Policy
- Knox City Council Governance Rule (Chapter 5 Conflicts of Interest)
- Fraud and Corruption Control Framework
- Child Safe Policy

Related Council Documents

- Knox City Council Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure
- Community Grant Assessment Panel Terms of Reference
- Community Events in Knox – Information Pack

8.6 Proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Senior Strategic Investment Officer, Johan Jansen van Vuuren Head of Economic Development, Michelle Bishop
Manager:	Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan
Executive:	Director, City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

SUMMARY

This report has been prepared in response to Notice of Motion No. 194 – Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, adopted by Council at its Meeting of 25 May 2026 which states (in part):

> "Request officers present a report at a future Council Meeting prior to November 2026 with a proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy developed in line with Option 2 as presented to the 27 April 2026 Council meeting."

The proposed Outdoor Dining Policy **(Attachment 1)** has been developed as a standalone policy that complements the existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit and Licence Agreement processes for the use of Council land. Consistent with Option 2 presented to Council on 27 April 2026 Council Meeting (**Attachment 2)**, the policy incorporates guidance informed by recent learnings from the extensive work undertaken by officers in relation to the original nine parklets. It also draws on benchmarking undertaken across nine local government areas (LGA's) to identify best practice approaches and key considerations relevant to the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

The proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy supports the longer-term activation of outdoor public space, to enhance the vibrancy and attractiveness of local activity centres. It is intended to enable outdoor dining in Knox while balancing associated risks and competing priorities. The Policy has been developed to provide a clear framework to guide decision making for hospitality businesses seeking to expand outdoor dining into public spaces, such as Council owned carparks. Importantly, the Policy promotes the safe and equitable placement of parklets while balancing the activation of public space with the needs and amenity of the surrounding community.

The proposed Policy aims to ensure the consistent and transparent application of process by Council officers, while improving applicants' understanding of the application process, statutory requirements, timelines, and the cost involved in the installation, operation and maintenance of parklets. It should be noted that a procedure and guidelines **(Attachment 3)** have been developed to support the Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy and assist businesses applying for an Outdoor Dining Parklet licence.

Officers recommend the proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy for Council adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy (Attachment 1) developed in line with Option 2 as presented to the 27 April 2026 Council meeting.
2. Note the procedures and guidelines to support the lodgement of Outdoor Dining Parklet applications and decision making in Attachment 3.

1. DISCUSSION

This report has been prepared in response to Notice of Motion No. 194 – Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, adopted by Council at its Meeting of 25 May 2026. The resolution requested officers to prepare a 'light touch' Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy **(Attachment 1)** based on recent learnings from parklet installations across Knox since COVID.

Council officers undertook extensive research and engaged broadly with internal and external stakeholders to inform the policy's development. The policy framework was further strengthened through benchmarking of nine local government authorities (LGA's) to identify best practice approaches and key considerations relevant to developing an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy. Council's statutory processes that guide and support outdoor dining were also reviewed, including the street trading and outdoor dining guidelines and permit requirements relating to footpath trading.

Currently, there is no approved Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy. Consequently, the development of a dedicated policy is required to consolidate and reference existing policies and processes. The resolution adopted by Council at its meeting on 25 May 2026 directed the creation of a standalone Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, with minimal changes to existing processes and to include the following:

- Refers to the existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program Guidelines for outdoor dining where the Guidelines currently apply.
- Refers to the existing Leases and Licences Policy and Licence Agreement process for exclusive use of Council land for parklets.
- Establishes policy guidelines:
  - that support the granting of a licence for a 12 month term with the option of a further 12 months renewal. At the conclusion of a 24 month period a new application would be required;
  - to not support parklets located on other government agency owned land e.g. Department of Transport and Planning where Council is required to act as the applicant, intermediary or licensee on behalf of the business for which the parklet is intended;
  - on appropriate temporary parklet structures;
  - to discourage parklets incorporating roof structures. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis where the applicant can demonstrate that the roof structure is temporary, capable of being removed without significant works, and compliant with all applicable statutory, planning, building, accessibility and safety requirements.
  - for the prompt removal of parklet structures to provide access for emergency and essential services as required;
  - for parklets to be maintained including gutters and drains, and restoration of Council property; and

  - for the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), undertaking a Road Safety Audit (RSA) and complying with all associated conditions as required.
- Introduces requirements for the capital cost of constructing a new parklet, as well as engaging the relevant statutory authorities such as a building surveyor to ensure compliance with current standards.
- Introduces a bond payable upfront for fixed parklets, where applicable.
- Introduces requirements for an annual inspection report to be prepared by a qualified building surveyor, where applicable.

Consistent with this direction, the policy was developed based on existing policies and processes and benchmarking with other councils and did not involve extensive formal community engagement.

The key objectives of the Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy are to:

- Enable Outdoor dining in Knox while managing risks and competing uses.
- Support the establishment of outdoor dining parklets on Council land only, where appropriate, subject to the decision-making process of Council.
- Clarify that Council will not consider applications for parklets within open space areas, unless it can be demonstrated that the primary function of the open space is not impacted.
- Clarify that parklets located on other government agency owned land e.g. Department of Transport and Planning will not be supported by Council due to administrative costs associated with obtaining approvals and Council's expected role in overseeing their ongoing management and operation.
- Guide decisions for the equitable and appropriate placement of parklets on Council land only.
- Ensure outdoor dining parklets are located in a safe and accessible manner having regard to any relevant statutory requirements.
- Provide consistent and transparent guidance to local businesses seeking to establish an Outdoor Dining Parklet.
- Provide guidance to parklet operators around standards for the ongoing operation of parklets and their management.
- Guide the development of financially sustainable licensing models for Council owned carparking spaces for outdoor dining parklets.

The following supporting information is also provided alongside the Policy in Attachment 3:
- Outdoor Dining Parklets Procedure.
- Assessment Guidelines.
- Indicative application details.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Officers have undertaken extensive internal and external stakeholder engagement to inform the various reports presented to Council on outdoor dining parklets. These discussions have culminated in the Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy presented in this report. Engagement has included feedback and input from Traffic and Transport, Property Management, Community Laws, Planning and Building. Nine councils were also consulted through desktop benchmarking and follow up

phone discussions to identify best practice approaches and key considerations relevant to developing an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

Broader community engagement has not been undertaken to inform the policy's development as this policy is intended to draw upon the learnings from local business engagement on the previous parklets established in Knox.

Officers have also previously engaged legal advice, land valuers and transport engineers and liaised with Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on their On-Road Dining Policy September 2024.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy is expected to contribute positively to local communities and the local economy by providing additional outdoor dining options for people to gather, socialise and connect. Outdoor dining can enhance the character and vibrancy of streetscapes, helping activate main streets and increase foot traffic throughout the day and into the evening. Outdoor dining can strengthen the night-time economy and support increased patronage of nearby businesses. It can also contribute to greater public presence and social activity, which can enhance the community's overall perception of safety.

The establishment of an outdoor dining parklet by a hospitality business requires written evidence of support from affected adjacent businesses plus three other businesses in the shopping strip following application. Where Council considers further consultation necessary, the applicant may be required to participate in a consultation process as determined by Council's Community Engagement Policy.

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 requirements of parklet construction as envisaged in the policy, including specifications for materials and fixings, design standards and drainage will address and aim to mitigate any potential environmental impacts associated with existing and future parklet structures. Otherwise, there are no known positive or negative environmental implications arising from this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy will be delivered within existing resources. This report, including the development of the Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, has been prepared within the City Futures Operating Budget for the 2026/27 financial year. This includes the cost of obtaining legal advice on the applicability of the Retail Leases Act (RLA) to the proposed arrangement.

Ongoing facilitation of outdoor dining parklets, including the assessment and establishment of new parklets in response to future demand, will require officer involvement across multiple departments. These include Property, Building, Traffic and Transport, Community Laws, Economic Development, and Risk Management.

Once established, the ongoing management of the parklet licences will be required by the property advocate (e.g. Economic Development) and property team for the administration of extensions, amendments and renewals which will require further resourcing.

It should be noted that there is significant potential for an increased demand for Outdoor Dining Parklets, which may have a negative impact on service plan priorities and resource allocation across relevant departments.

The cost of establishing and operating Outdoor Dining Parklets will not be funded by Council. All parklet related costs such as construction, installation, maintenance, operation and removal, together with applicable fees and charges in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges Schedule and any Occupancy Agreement, are to be fully borne by the business owner.
Fees and charges, including the rental of car parking spaces occupied by a parklet, will apply to the licence holder.

The fee structure for each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, informed by an independent valuation of local lease rates for hospitality businesses utilisation of car parking spaces.

Land valuations across Knox retail activity centre locations vary considerably and impacts the determination of annual licence agreement fees payable. Typically, annual valuations for a car parking bay within Knox range from $1,740 - $2,700 per annum per parking bay.

The cost of the independent valuations is to be recovered from the applicant through the licence application process. Therefore, valuations cannot be undertaken until Council has received the application and the applicable fee.

7. RISKS

The process, risk, time and monetary cost of parklet establishment may impact hospitality businesses' willingness to pursue the establishment of new parklets. Additionally, the operational and maintenance cost of hosting a parklet, informs the weighing up of commercial outcomes and determines the commercial viability of uptake.

Officers expect that ongoing facilitation of new parklets would require increased officer resources across multiple internal departments, including Property Management, Traffic and Transport, Community Laws, Economic Development, Building and Legal. A significant increase in applications may require resourcing the implementation of the Policy or process to be revisited however this cannot be determined at this time.

The development of the proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy has allowed Council officers to pro-actively consider a broad range of issues that informs the location criteria, process and required standards, that ensures transparency and consistency in the assessment of applications for Outdoor Dining Parklets by Council officers.

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.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

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.

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 - Outdoor Dining Parklets Policy 2026 [**8.6.1** - 4 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - 2026-04-27 - Meeting of Council - Potential Municipal Wide Outdoor Dining Policy [**8.6.2** - 19 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy Guidelines [**8.6.3** - 10 pages]

Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy

Policy Number:	TBC	**Directorate:**	City Liveability
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager City Futures
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	1
Review Date:	4 Years from Council Approval Date	**KX Reference**	D26-214846

1. Purpose

The Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy is intended to enable outdoor dining in Knox, while managing risks and competing uses, and to provide a framework to guide decision making on food and drink businesses expanding outdoor dining areas into public spaces such as Council carparks.

2. Context

The extension of outdoor dining into public spaces, including car parking spaces, was accelerated by the Victorian Government and local councils in late 2020 to assist hospitality businesses to expand trading into public areas on a temporary basis, as part of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative highlighted the need for policy guidance on decisions for the operation of parklets on an ongoing basis. This policy considers learnings and feedback from parklet operators, other business owners and the community following the construction of nine parklets during the initial period. This policy also draws on Council's licence agreement process and street trading and outdoor dining permit process.

The policy supports the longer-term activation of outdoor public space to increase the vibrancy of our local centres. It formalises a framework for consistent and transparent decision making that ensures the opportunities for outdoor dining are implemented safely and effectively across Knox. The policy also balances activation outcomes with community amenity by managing the competing interests of public and private use of on-street, car-parking spaces and Council land.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to applications by eligible local hospitality businesses for Outdoor Dining Parklets located on Council land within the City of Knox.

This Policy does not replace or remove the requirement to obtain any permit, approval, licence or consent required under Local Government Act 2020 (or its successor), other applicable legislation, Amenity Local Law 2020 (or its successor), Council policies, or other regulatory requirements.

This policy does not apply to the following:

- footpath/roadside/nature strips/reserves trading
- road and/or laneway closures; and
- events.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Knox City Council Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Guidelines, and the Knox City Council Roadside Trading Permit Guidelines.

4. Policy

4.1 Policy Principles

Council's decisions regarding Outdoor Dining Parklets will be guided by the following principles:

1. Activation - supporting vibrant and attractive activity centres that encourage local economic activity.
2. Safety - ensuring public safety is not compromised through the installation or operation of a parklet.
3. Accessibility - maintaining equitable access for all users of public spaces and complying with relevant accessibility requirements.
4. Amenity - protecting and enhancing the amenity of surrounding businesses, public spaces and the broader community, and balancing competing priorities.
5. Equity - providing fair and consistent assessment of applications and access to public land opportunities.
6. Financial Responsibility - ensuring that costs associated with the installation, operation, maintenance, and removal of parklets are borne by the benefiting business and not by Council or the broader community. Council reserves the right to undertake works at parklet locations having given prior notice to parklet operators. Council will not be held responsible for any revenue loss, as a result of the works.

4.2 Policy Objectives

- Enable outdoor dining in Knox while managing risks and competing uses.
- Support the establishment of outdoor dining parklets on Council land only, where appropriate, , subject to the decision-making process of Council.
- Not support parklets located on other government agency owned land e.g. Department of Transport and Planning where Council is required to act as the applicant, intermediary or licensee on behalf of the business for which the parklet is intended.
- Guide decisions for the equitable and appropriate placement of parklets on Council land only.
- Ensure outdoor dining parklets are located in a safe and accessible manner having regard to any relevant statutory requirements.
- Provide consistent and transparent guidance to local businesses seeking to establish an Outdoor Dining Parklet.
- Provide guidance to parklet operators around standards for the ongoing operation of parklets and their management.

- Guide the development of financially sustainable licensing models for Council owned carparking spaces for outdoor dining parklets.

4.3 Fees

Applicable fees and charges will be determined in accordance with Council's adopted Annual Fees and Charges Schedule and any Occupancy Agreement.

5. References

5.1 Knox 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.
- Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity
  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.

5.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Road Management Act 2004 and Austroads Guide to Road Design
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- National Construction Code standards
- Charter of Human Rights
  - This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights

5.3 Related Council Policies and Procedures

- Knox Leasing and Licensing Policy 2025-2029
- Knox Sustainable Buildings and Infrastructure Policy 2026-2031
- Knox Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Guidelines
- Knox Roadside Trading Permit Guidelines
- Community Engagement Policy

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Parklet	Re-purposed on-street/off-street parking space/s which are designed to extend public space to provide an additional place for congregation, accessible public seating and landscaping.
On-street/ Off-street parking	Designated Council owned parking spaces located on public roads or car parks that are generally occupied by a vehicle for a specified period.
Permit	An approval issued under the Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020 or subsequent Amenity Local Laws that authorises the temporary use of public land for a specific purpose.
Licence agreement	An agreement where the Council grants the Licensee the non- exclusive right to occupy a defined area ("Licensed area ") on Council land, in return for the payment of a Licence fee, outgoings and agreed maintenance responsibilities.
Lease agreement	An agreement where the Council grants the Tenant the right to exclusive occupancy of a defined area ("Leased area ") on Council land, in return for the payment of Rental, outgoings and agreed maintenance responsibilities by the Tenant
Council land	Land owned by Knox City Council
Occupancy Agreement	Either a lease or a licence agreement
Other Government land	Land owned by a government agency (other than Knox City Council) Land managed by Knox City Council on behalf of Victorian State Government
Private land	Land not owned or managed by Council or other government agency
Hospitality business	A business that provides services focussed on welcoming, serving and caring for customers by offering food and beverages such as restaurants, cafes and bars.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Director City Liveability.

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 Policy, it must be considered by Council.

8.2 Potential Municipal Wide Outdoor Dining Policy

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For noting
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SUMMARY
This report has been prepared in response to Alternate Motion – Outdoor Dining Parklets, adopted by Council at its meeting of 27 October 2025 (**Attachment 1**) which states (in part):

Request officers present a report to Council by end of April 2026 outlining a possible approach for a municipal-wide outdoor dining policy and potential timing to initiate the development of the policy.

The report outlines options and methodologies for the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy if Council resolves to proceed in that direction.

In considering the future approach for Outdoor Dining in Knox, there are three potential options for Council to consider:

- **Option 1: No change to existing policies and processes.** Maintain the existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program and Licence Agreement on Council land process to support outdoor dining. This requires no changes to Council's current process.
- **Option 2: Create a standalone Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy with minimal changes to existing policies and processes**. Prepare a standalone Outdoor Dining Parking that refers to the existing policies and process in Option 1 but adds policy guidance based on recent learnings from the extension of existing parklets.
- **Option 3: Comprehensive Review**. Develop and adopt a dedicated Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, including extensive community engagement.

To inform the approach, this report considers:

- learnings from the current outdoor dining parklet initiative established during the pandemic;
- Council's existing statutory processes that guide and support outdoor dining;
- benchmarking with other councils who have established their own outdoor dining program;
- key elements that would inform and/or comprise a Knox Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy;
- current demand from local businesses for outdoor dining parklets;
- resourcing requirements (resource and financial); and
- potential timing to commence investigation and development of the Knox Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy (Option 3).

If Council was to pursue Option 3, development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, Officers recommend a two phased approach that initially seeks to understand business demand for establishing an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy and to confirm broader community sentiment and

support. This approach is informed by the limited interest shown by local businesses in establishing parklets since the conclusion of the State-funded Covid-19 Outdoor Dining program, a trend further supported by benchmarking across Local Government Areas (LGAs) that indicates a decline in demand.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note:

1) The 3 options officers have identified to support outdoor dining parklets in Knox.
2) That if supported, Option 3 - preparation of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy (including the recommended pre-Policy engagement) can commence in the second half of 2026/27 subject to budget allocation. An estimated budget allocation of $48,000 (approximately) would be required as well internal staff resources from a number of Council departments.

1. DISCUSSION

Officers have considered the following factors in determining approaches to support Outdoor Dining in Knox:

- learnings from the current outdoor dining parklet initiative established during the pandemic;
- current demand from local businesses for outdoor dining parklets;
- Council's existing statutory processes that support outdoor dining;
- benchmarking with other councils who have established their own outdoor dining program;
- key elements that would inform and/or comprise a Knox Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy;
- resourcing requirements (officer and financial); and
- potential timing to commence investigation and development of the Knox Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

1.1 Learnings from the current initiative

As part of the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package initiative implemented by the Victorian Government during the COVID19 Pandemic, nine parklet structures were funded and constructed within activity centres throughout Knox. At the time of writing this report, the parklets installed during COVID have been removed or are in the process of being removed due to parklet operators no longer wishing to or unable to continue with their parklets.

Officers have identified issues arising from complex and historical land ownership arrangements during the assessment period of the original nine parklets, affecting the statutory pathways that need to be complied with for the operation of parklets. Issues include:

- multi-ownership of parking spaces, partly Council and partly privately owned land, triggering different approvals processes;
- parklets operating across multiple carparking spaces with more than one private landowner, who is also often not the business owner; and
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) owned parking spaces requiring DTP approval for parklets with Council oversight.

The ownership of the land occupied by the outdoor dining parklets largely dictates the statutory processes to be followed to facilitate outdoor dining. Planning, building, and other statutory

requirements are to be considered for different ownership and use arrangements. This would also apply to potential future applications for parklets on private land.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) owned parking spaces have a number of additional requirements with the onus placed upon Council, not necessarily the business, to manage and take responsibility for. The following outlines the key requirements as described by the DTP On-Road Dining Policy September 2024 and discussions with DTP officers:

- Councils are responsible for permit and licence applications and for managing on-road dining sites, including ensuring compliance with safety guidelines.
- Councils must submit a detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and Road Safety Audit with their application, which includes the appropriate use of barriers to protect diners from traffic. The design and type of barriers must be recommended by road traffic experts within the TMP, adhering to DTP safety guidelines. The TMP must be independently reviewed and verified by a DTP prequalified Road Safety Auditor. Any findings from the audit must be addressed and signed off before the application is lodged with DTP.
- Councils must maintain ongoing oversight to ensure sites comply with the approved TMP and safety requirements. Councils have the authority to issue sub-licences to local businesses, and the relationship and compliance with permit conditions are managed by the Council.
- Councils must ensure businesses have appropriate insurance coverage for on-road dining sites, listing the Head, Transport for Victoria as an interested party. This ensures that all parties are adequately protected in the event of an incident.
- On-road dining will only be permitted on roads that meet specific location criteria.
- Permits and licences will have a default expiration period of 12 months, with a maximum of 18 months for any given licence.
- Renewals require a resubmitted application, including TMP, Road Safety Audit and insurance documentation (potentially a 12-month cycle).
- Parklets and other dining structures must be temporary and easily removable to accommodate road works and maintenance. Council is responsible for determining whether a structure is ‘temporary’.

The process and costs incurred by businesses in establishing an outdoor dining parklet may vary depending on several factors, including:

- land ownership arrangements, which determine the statutory pathway to be followed by Council (where parklets are located on Department of Transport and Planning land) or by the proprietor, resulting in different governance arrangements, fee structures and resource impacts;
- a non-refundable licence application fee of $1,040 for parklets on Council-owned land, or an administration fee for parklets on DTP land (to be determined);
- the capital cost of new parklet construction, or the refurbishment of existing structures to achieve compliance with current standards;
- building surveyor costs, where applicable;
- the cost of preparing a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and undertaking a Road Safety Audit (RSA); and
- an annual rental charge, where applicable.

The original outdoor dining parklet program was fully funded through the Victorian Government's COVID-19 Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Program. Research by officers indicates that the current establishment process and associated costs may present a significant barrier for many businesses.

1.2 Council's existing statutory processes that guide and support outdoor dining

Currently there is no Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy for Council owned or managed land such as car parking spaces. While street trading and general outdoor dining guidelines exist in the Community Laws and Property space, along with the requirement of a permit to sell, trade, or place items on a footpath; there are no specific guidelines or policy addressing parklets or similar structures, particularly in car parking spaces on the other side of the kerb.

The absence of a clear policy and comprehensive guidelines make it challenging for Council officers to provide consistent advice and direction to businesses, therefore making it difficult for businesses to consider the viability of required investment, prior to paying the non-refundable application fee.

However, it is important for Council to understand that the level of demand for outdoor dining in Knox appears minimal, as officers have received very few requests for additional outdoor dining parklets. As such, Council would need to gain a comprehensive understanding of the associated complexities, alongside the potential demand, to determine the need for an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

1.3 Benchmarking with other councils who have established their own outdoor dining program

Officers undertook desktop benchmarking and targeted phone interviews with Bayside, Boroondara, Kingston, Maroondah, Monash, Stonnington, Whitehorse, Yarra City and Yarra Ranges councils to inform understanding of best practice and identify key considerations relevant to the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy. The benchmarking indicates there is no single prescribed model, with councils adopting a range of policy and guideline approaches reflecting local conditions, risks and objectives.

Approaches across councils vary, with some councils adopting separate policies for outdoor dining (including parklets) and footpath trading, while others have implemented a single, consolidated framework. This variation is largely influenced by whether a footpath trading policy was already in place, and the extent to which councils sought to integrate parklets into existing regulatory and operational processes.

Several of the councils developed outdoor dining parklet guidelines to support their outdoor dining policies. These guidelines provide clear and consistent direction on preferred locations, design principles, urban design, structure types, fees, operational and regulatory requirements.

Safety has been the overriding consideration within guidelines and policy development of the councils consulted, requiring significant input from the internal Traffic Departments, with some councils opting for the engagement of qualified Traffic Engineering consultants.

Parklet design and requirements varied across LGAs, with many councils providing examples or standard design drawings in their policies or supporting guidelines. Despite this variation,

statutory requirements were largely consistent including certificates of compliance, accessibility standards, stormwater management considerations and traffic management requirements.

The requirement for parklets to be temporary, easily removable and replaceable (for example, to accommodate roadworks, seasonal operations, or cessation of use by a business owner), combined with the DTP requirement (parklets on DTP land only) that they must not be fixed to the road or any other structure, has led many councils to encourage businesses to hire or purchase prefabricated parklets. These can be installed or removed within 24 hours, either as complete units or modular components. Some councils have prohibited covered parklets to avoid the need for structures to be fixed to the road surface. Developing a standardised parklet design and associated facilities would further streamline assessment processes and reduce further maintenance and legacy complexities.

Benchmarking also found that several councils support locating parklets directly on the road surface, without a raised platform where feasible, with the parklet area framed by appropriate fencing and safety structures. This approach significantly reduces cost and complexity while maintaining all required safety standards. When combined with a requirement that parklets only be considered for applicants who hold an existing footpath trading permit, this addresses the issue of accessibility and frees up valuable space in a one or two parking bay parklet.

Through benchmarking, it has been further confirmed that demand for parklets has continued to decline since the original pandemic inspired State funded program. While occasional enquiries are still received, the overall number of parklets has reduced. This trend persists even in councils where local conditions might otherwise favour parklets. This can be attributed to many factors, including the cost of refurbishment or replacement of original structures, type of business operating the parklet (e.g. take away vs sit down dining), the serving of alcohol, general economic conditions, limited suitable locations and to some extent the short lease periods and uncertainty of long term lease availability. Most councils surveyed are therefore not anticipating an increase in demand for parklets.

Parklets located on DTP managed land introduce an additional layer of complexity for both businesses and councils. For councils, they place greater pressure on internal resources and increase potential risk. For businesses, they may create additional compliance obligations and consequently, additional costs. As the responsible authority, Council may also experience negative business sentiment, particularly as engagement with DTP can prolong approval timeframes, placing responsibility onto Council.

Of the councils benchmarked, only one continues to permit parklets on DTP managed land. Several councils now have policies restricting parklets to Council managed land to avoid the complexities associated with shared ownership between private landholders and DTP. Others do not explicitly state this as policy but apply location based criteria, such as excluding clearways, certain speed zones, and safety-sensitive areas which effectively prevent parklets from being placed on DTP land.

Responsibility for establishing parklets typically begins with Economic Development services, with input from Planning and other regulatory departments. Ongoing management of parklet programs is most commonly overseen by Placemaking, Community Laws, and Traffic/transport departments.

1.4 Options for supporting Outdoor Dining Parklets in Knox

Officers have identified 3 options to support outdoor dining in Knox.

- **Option 1: No change to current process.** Maintain the existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program and Licence Agreement pathway with no changes to current processes. This option does not provide specific guidance on outdoor dining parklet structures or upfront guidance on the suitability of car parking spaces being utilised for outdoor dining. As such each application would need to be assessed on its individual merits.
- **Option 2: Minimal change – Create a standalone policy that refers to existing policies and process with minor updates to current process based on recent learnings.** This option provides a standalone policy that refers to existing Council policies and process outlined in Option 1. The policy should include broad guidance on appropriate parklet structures, some roles and responsibilities of applicants and Council, exclude certain locations from parklet provision (e.g. DTP owned land) but not provide upfront advice on the suitability of locations for parklets, detailed terms and conditions for parklet construction and management, etc.
- **Option 3: Develop a more comprehensive and holistic consideration of Outdoor Dining Parklets in Knox.** This option can guide a more strategic view of where parklets should be supported (or not) based on balancing car parking needs versus outdoor dining demand, provide more guidance on parklet construction, can introduce an application fee structure and decision making pathway commensurate with the administrative cost to Council and expeditious decision making.

The tables below outline the three options for Councillors to consider regarding the future of Outdoor Dining in Knox.

Table 1: **OPTION 1 – No change to current process**
Key Policy Guidelines
<u>Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program</u> Allows Trading activities on public footpaths and Council land (including footpaths, carparking spaces and street spaces for: ○ Signs; ○ displayed goods; ○ chairs; ○ tables; ○ umbrellas; ○ planter boxes; and ○ any other item placed out by the business. • Businesses are charged fees based on the following: ○ size of advertising signs (small, medium and large); ○ display of goods (single use permit, annual permit); and ○ chairs and tables (fee per table and per chair). • Non-exclusive use of public space for outdoor dining. • Does not support fixed parklet structures. <u>Licence Agreement</u> • Allows exclusive use of Council owned land for agreed timeframes.

Table 1: **OPTION 1 – No change to current process**
• Application fee and annual rental fee determined in accordance with Council's Leases and Licences Policy. • No guidelines on appropriate parklet structure design or appropriateness of loss of car parking. DTP owned land Apply DTP's On-Road Dining Policy to assess applications for outdoor dining on DTP owned car parks. No position on whether Council should support this.
Council Service Areas
• Community Laws • Property • Economic Development
Estimated Cost
• No upfront cost to Council to apply existing processes to support outdoor dining requires. • Increase in officer time to assess applications within Licence Agreement process given lack of guidelines specific to outdoor dining parklets on Council land and ad-hoc decision making. • Application fees and other fees incurred by business owners are established under existing Fees and Charges Schedules for Street Trading and Licence Agreements
Officer comments

Considerations
• Existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program does not support fixed parklet structures or exclusive use of public space.
• Licence Agreement allows exclusive use of Council land for parklet however no guidance available on appropriateness of parklets structures. Parklets, management and operation to be negotiated through Licence Agreement process, each time.
• Negotiating a Licence Agreement may be resource intensive and inefficient for businesses
• A number of retail precincts have received streetscape upgrades to widen the footpaths in retail centres. These precincts may support greater take up of footpath trading. These include:
  ○ Studfield Shopping Centre;
  ○ Bayswater Activity Centre (Mountain Highway); and
  ○ Ferntree Gully village (Station Street)
• Council must act as conduit for applications between business owners and DTP for parklets on DTP land including ensuring any statutory requirements from DTP are met e.g. Road Safety Audit.
• DTP do not support fixed structures on DTP land, negating some structures from being approved.
• Council is responsible for any agreement for parklets on DTP land, requiring greater Council oversight of parklet construction, operation and management.
• No fees payable for parklets on DTP land.
 	
Potential Issues
• Approval of parklets through Licence Agreement will be undertaken on an ad-hoc basis and may be resource intensive and subject of Council resolution.
• Longer decision making timeframes for Licence Agreements as approval is subject to Council resolution.
• No formal process or policy to manage outdoor dining parklet structure requests which may lead to frustration for businesses owners.
• DTP place higher onus on councils to determine appropriateness of parklets on DTP owned car parking space based on their policy requirements, including ensuring parklet structure are not fixed. This is a resource intensive process.
• Currently no process for Council to receive fees for establishing parklets on DTP land, as is possible through the Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program and Licence Agreement process on

Table 1: **OPTION 1 – No change to current process**
Council land. Therefore, the administrative cost of assessment and approval is borne by Council

Table 2: OPTION 2 – Minimal Change: Prepare an ODP Policy based on recent learnings
Updated Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program
Prepare a standalone Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy which: • Refers to the existing Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Program Guidelines for outdoor dining where the Guidelines currently apply. • Refers to the existing Leases and Licences Policy and Licence Agreement process for exclusive use of Council land for parklets. • Establishes policy guidelines: o to prohibit establishment of parklets on DTP land o on appropriate parklet structures o for the removal of parklet structures to provide access for essential services as required o for parklets to be maintained including gutters and drains, and restoration of Council property o for the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), undertaking a Road Safety Audit (RSA), and complying with all associated conditions as required. • Introduces requirements for the capital cost of constructing a new parklet, as well as engaging the relevant statutory authorities such as a building surveyor to ensure compliance with current standards. • Introduces a bond payable upfront for fixed parklets, where applicable. • Introduce requirements for an annual inspection report be prepared by a qualified building surveyor. • Includes 'testing' the policy with local traders through ongoing trader engagement undertaken by Economic Development.
Council Service Areas
• Community Laws • Building Services • Economic Development • Property • Traffic and Transport • Risk Management
Estimated Cost
• Minimal in-house resources required to prepare new policy. • No external resources anticipated. • Administration of policy with removal of DTP sites from parklet provision considerably reduces officer resource requirement to assess and facilitate process.
Officer comments
<u>Considerations</u> • Does not require major policy redevelopment or engagement. • Policy can be established in-house relying on 'moderate' officer resources. • Consolidates existing policies and guidelines within a standalone Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy to be clear to businesses and community on how to apply and how Council assesses outdoor dining applications in Knox. • Policy to include new provisions based on learnings from recent officer experience in extending the

Table 2: OPTION 2 – Minimal Change: Prepare an ODP Policy based on recent learnings

existing outdoor dining in Knox.

- Does not support parklets on DTP land due to the administrative burden placed on Council to do so.
- Supports activation in selected areas where parklets are feasible.
- Allows officers to gauge interest for a dedicated, more interventionist outdoor dining parklet policy based on demand.
- Business owners are responsible for addressing the Policy requirements including engaging relevant statutory authorities such as a building surveyor and traffic engineer.

Potential Issues

- Officer resources required to assess and determine appropriateness of parklet structures on an ad-hoc basis.
- Longer decision making timeframes as Licence Agreements are subject to Council resolution.
- Equity concerns where other businesses may not have access to car parks for similar commercial purposes. Public land is being exclusively used for private, commercial purposes.
- Businesses may not complete their annual inspections, requiring Council to follow up and enforce compliance.
- Business owner may cease operations and leave the parklet and any associated remediation works incomplete. Establishment of a bond is intended to address this issue.

Table 3: OPTION 3 - Comprehensive Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy

PHASE ONE: Testing future demand				
ACTION	**MONTHS**	**DETAIL**	**WHO**	**COSTING/ RESOURCE**
Engagement Strategy to test future demand	6 months	Develop consultant brief. Procure consultant Develop engagement plan. Develop collateral. Develop Engagement Questions. Identify locations and deliver pop up sessions (2 or 3). Develop online questionnaire “Have Your Say”. Analyse results.	Consultant, Eco Dev, Comms	$20,000 1-2 days p/week (peak consultation period approx. 3-4 days for 2 week period) $2K – collateral (operational budget)
Report back to Council	2-3 months	Prepare report for ELT and Council detailing engagement results and recommendations	Eco Dev	3-4 days per month
			Total Phase One	**$22,000**

PHASE TWO: Steps involved in the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy				
ACTION	**TIMELINE**	**DETAIL**	**WHO**	**COSTING/ RESOURCE**
Procurement of consultant(s) to support development of Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy	1 month	Internal and external stakeholder identification. Procurement and appointment of consultant to undertake Parklet identifier service (3-4 locations) and write policy.	Eco Dev, Consultant	2 days per week $25,000 estimate (Parklet identifier service $10k, Drafting of policy $15k)
Draft Policy Development	6 months	Review best practice, case studies, legislative requirements and existing Council policies and guidelines for design standards, safety, accessibility and street trading. Internal Working Group consultation Development design standards etc.	Eco Dev Community Laws, Traffic and Transport, Building and Planning, Property Management and Risk.	2 days per week in total 1-2 days in total
Council Adoption of Draft Policy for Consultation	2-3 months	Finalise draft policy and seek Council endorsement for public consultation of draft policy.	Eco Dev	1 –2 day per month
Public Consultation	2 months	Develop communication plan. Release policy draft for feedback via “Have Your Say” platform including FAQs - 4 weeks	Eco Dev, Comms	$1,000 collateral (operation budget) 1-2 days pe week
Council Adoption of Policy	2-3 months	Adoption of Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.	Eco Dev	1-2 day per week
Website update and development of forms	1 month	Outdoor dining program, Street trader Permits, fees, FAQ’s, Permit Application and Renewal forms.	Comms, Digital, Eco Dev, Community Laws	Operational

PHASE TWO: Steps involved in the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy				
ACTION	**TIMELINE**	**DETAIL**	**WHO**	**COSTING/ RESOURCE**
Implementation and Monitoring	ongoing	Monitor and review.	Eco Dev, Community Laws	Operational
			Total Phase Two	**$26,000**
			Total: Policy Development (approx.) 22-25 months, and	**$48,000**

Option 3: Key elements that would inform / guide a Knox Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy

The information gathering phase for developing a potential approach to an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy enabled officers to identify a range of strategic and operational considerations experienced by Council officers, parklet operators and benchmarked LGA's. The key elements outlined below capture common themes and issues for consideration, should Council resolve to proceed with the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

- *Consultation to confirm demand and take up* - Potential future demand for outdoor dining parklets should be informed through a structured pre-policy engagement process, enabling Council to ascertain current demand and identify potential future interest in outdoor dining within the municipality. The engagement process needs to determine whether businesses support outdoor dining parklets in principle and are willing to take action to implement them. The return on investment in developing a policy needs to be determined.
- *Principles for preferred locations for outdoor dining* – the Policy should guide whether Council supports outdoor dining in all activity centre car parks or specifically Council/privately owned sites given the separate statutory process and compliance requirements for DTP owned car parks.
- *Parking audit by activity* centre - Conducting a car parking audit by activity centre to understand the impact of potential loss of car parking spaces can be effectively managed by identifying suitable parklet friendly zones. This process would guide Council on the number of parklet structures that could be supported within a precinct as well as highlight areas where introducing a parklet may result in a significant loss of parking and negatively affect the precinct. The purpose of the audit is to inform density limits for each centre and to ensure equitable distribution of parklets within centres. The engagement of specialist traffic engineers would be required to assist in this audit.
- *Siting and design guidelines* – the Policy should provide guidance and criteria for the siting of parklet structures within car parking spaces, having regard to traffic, construction and safety considerations. Other considerations such as the design and materials used in construction of parklets could also be included in the Policy. Design guidelines should have regard to the temporary nature of the structures and drainage requirements. The engagement of specialist traffic engineers would address the program's safety requirements, provide robust technical oversight, and alleviate internal resourcing constraints.
- *Licence Agreement Terms and Conditions* - The Policy should clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of Council and parklet operators, with particular emphasis on shared use arrangements, the engagement of technical experts by applicants to support applications,

public liability insurance, waste and litter management, graffiti, compliance monitoring, ongoing maintenance, parklet removal requirements and duration of agreements.

- *Fees and charges* – the Policy should indicate a fee structure (linked to Council's annual Fees and Charges Budget) associated with the application to operate a parklet, including a bond for the removal of a parklet should a business close and any costs payable to Council. Separately, the Policy should indicate where the applicant is responsible for costs associated with establishing and ongoing operation of any parklet.
- *Licence duration* - Licence durations and renewal arrangements should be structured to avoid exclusivity or preferential access for individual businesses or a select group and be responsive to the change in businesses.

Option 3: Resourcing Requirements

Development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy involves multiple phases; research, stakeholder engagement, drafting, consultation and implementation. Given the various considerations to inform an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy and statutory requirements, input from a number of Council departments and external technical expertise will be required to inform the Policy development. This includes Economic Development, Communications and Engagement, Planning, Building, Traffic and Transport, Property, Community Laws. External input into the Policy may include design or placemaking consultants, traffic engineers and legal advice.

The report notes that internal capacity is already constrained by existing service plan priorities and ongoing parklet management tasks. Should Council decide to proceed with the development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, it would need to dedicate a Project Manager (0.4-0.6 EFT) to oversee delivery of the project. In addition, external expertise including engagement consultants and traffic engineering and management consultants would be required to assist the Project Manager in the development of the policy.

This report notes the constrained internal capacity from existing service plan priorities and ongoing parklet management responsibilities. It also highlights the safety requirements and the technical nature of road safety engineering and operation. To ensure compliance, it is proposed that consultants specialising in traffic engineering and management be engaged to support the project manager in developing the proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy. The proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy would set the strategic direction of Council for Parklets and Street Trading and ensure consistent, equitable and standardized decision making and actions by Council officers.

- It will need to address the complexities around location, landownership, including DTP permit conditions process and compliance where applicable.
- It will need to define eligibility requirements, address the application process, assessment criteria and decision-making framework for parklet and footpath permit applications and ensure transparency and equitability.
- It should further define the roles and responsibilities of Council and the proprietors, confirm the Pedestrian and Road safety standards, ensure compliance to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
- The Policy needs to provide clarity and consistency on issues of shared occupancy, shared ownership, expanded footpath trading, preferred parklet locations and optimal density, structure design, materials and fixtures, drainage and maintenance, and other key elements The policy will be drafted following extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Officers have undertaken engagement with a range of stakeholders to inform this report. Internally, advice was sought from a range of departments including Traffic and Transport, Building, Property Management, Community Laws, and Planning teams. Externally, nine LGA's were examined through desktop benchmarking and follow up phone discussions to identify best practice approaches and key considerations relevant to developing an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy that incorporates footpath trading.
Officers have also liaised with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and considered their On-Road Dining Policy September 2024 and guidelines.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The provision of outdoor dining contributes positively to local communities and the local economy by providing additional outdoor dining options for people to gather, socialise and connect.

Outdoor dining can enhance the character and vibrancy of streetscapes, helping activate main streets and increase foot traffic throughout the day and into the evening. Outdoor dining can strengthen the night-time economy and support increased patronage of nearby businesses. It can also contribute to greater public presence and social activity, which can enhance the community's overall perception of safety.

However, since the introduction of the nine Outdoor Dining Parklets, there have been very few requests from local businesses to establish additional parklets at their location. Overall, feedback on the initiative has also been limited.

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 requirements of parklet construction as envisaged in the policy, including specifications for materials and fixtures, design standards and drainage will address and aim to mitigate any potential environmental impacts associated with existing and future parklet structures. Otherwise, there are no known positive or negative environmental implications arising from this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This report has been prepared within the City Futures Operating Budget for the 2025/26 financial year. Ongoing facilitation of outdoor parklets at existing locations, as well as the assessment and establishment of new parklets in response to future demand, will require officer resources across multiple departments. These include Property, Building, Traffic and Transport, Community Laws, Economic Development and Risk Management.

Officers have invested considerable time conducting research, including benchmarking outdoor dining policies and guidelines across a number of LGAs, engagement with DTP, and review of the DTP On-Road Dining Policy September 2024. Extensive internal consultation was also undertaken with key Council departments to inform the officers of the considerations, requirements and steps involved in developing an effective and coordinated Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy.

Council will need to consider the additional impacts of the policy development on resource capacity and the delivery of confirmed Service Plan priorities. The extent of any impacts or delays to existing Service Plan commitments is unknown at this time, as does the future level of demand from local businesses for outdoor dining parklets.

To deliver on Option 2 as outlined in this report requires minimal upfront cost (officer or financial) to establish. However, the resource cost to administer these options are more intensive as it requires officers to make assessments of parklet applications on a case by case basis without a comprehensive policy.

The requirements associated with developing a Policy, particularly Option 3, including establishing a transparent application, assessment and decision-making framework, and ensuring DTP compliance, support the engagement of external consultants with specialist traffic and safety expertise and demonstrated experience in Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy development. Funding for such an engagement would need to be considered for inclusion in the 2026/27 budget.

The indicative cost to develop Option 3's two-phased approach for the preparation of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy (excluding internal staff resources) is outlined below.

Phase One – Business and community engagement to determine local demand		
Action	**Description**	**Est. Cost (excl GST)**
Community and Business engagement	Engagement pop-ups and consultation surveys to be performed by external consultants.	$22,000
Phase Two – Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy Development subject to the outcome of Phase One		
Action	**Description**	**Est. Cost (excl GST)**
Policy development resource planning, review and update research, internal working group stakeholder engagement scoping, policy drafting, Council adoption of draft, consultation of draft policy, Council adoption of policy, website update and development of forms, implementation and monitoring.	Based on initial discussions with recommended traffic engineering consultancy firm (this company is accredited with DTP to undertake Road Safety Audits (RSA)).	$16,000
Parklet identifier service Based on 3 – 4 Activity Centres	Traffic engineering consultancy firm to review road / pedestrian / patron safety, best location in activity centres/main streets, density capacity per location.	$10,000
	Total External resources cost	**$48,000**

7. RISKS

The cost of establishing a parklet including application fees, structure design and construction, statutory and road safety compliance requirements, permits and ongoing licensing fees, combined

with the relatively short-term occupancy (DTP land) and associated extension costs, may reduce business willingness to pursue new parklets weigh up commercial outcomes.

Given this, the cost of developing, implementing, and managing an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy may outweigh the benefits, given the currently low number of parklets, the uncertainty around future commitments, and the likelihood of continued low uptake.

Ongoing facilitation of new parklets at new locations would require increased officer resources across multiple internal departments, including Property, Traffic and Transport, Community Laws, Economic Development, Building and Legal.

Legal advice previously obtained for the existing parklets highlights the complexity of land ownership arrangements which involve multiple landholders i.e. Council, DTP, and private owners. As a result, outdoor dining in some locations may require a tailored approach and additional resourcing, particularly where complexities stem from historical Council land ownership arrangements.

The development of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy, however allows Council to proactively consider the broad range of issues to be assessed when assessing applications for outdoor dining. In the absence of a policy, these decisions would need to be made on an ad-hoc basis and lacks transparency.

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.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

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.

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 - 2025-10-27 - SIGNED - Meeting of Council - Minutes [**8.2.1** - 4 pages]

Docusign Envelope ID: E71C9823-82E8-4AC3-9F00-823EB0632284

8 Officer Reports

8.10 Outdoor Dining - Parklets

SUMMARY
This report responds to Council's resolution at its Mid-Month Meeting on 10 June 2025 in relation to the existing Outdoor Dining Parklets in Knox. Relevant to this report, the resolution, raised as an Alternate Motion is as follows:

That Council:

1) *Approve the removal of the outdoor dining parklets located within Knox, with the exception of parklets currently in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), ItalianIssimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South).*
2) *Approve the retention of the parklets benefitting ItalianIssimo, Paddy's Tavern, Charcoal Chicken and Schokolade on a temporary basis until 31 October 2025 to allow Council officers to prepare advice to Council on the following:*
    a. *a process to facilitate the ongoing or permanent provision of an outdoor dining parklet(s) benefiting the proprietors identified in Point 1, noting land ownership arrangements, statutory approvals, and other requirements;*
    b. *whether the existing outdoor dining parklet structures should be removed (noting the temporary nature of the structures) and rebuilt based on updated Building advice and other matters outlined in Point 2a);*
    c. *estimated cost for the removal and/or constructions of any new outdoor dining structure based on the Building advice noted in Point 2b);*
    d. *advice on any proposed governance arrangements that should be in place for the ongoing or permanent provision of an outdoor dining parklet(s) with respect to ongoing management, maintenance and operation of the parklets; and*
    e. *any other matters deemed relevant to Council's consideration of this matter.*
3) *Authorise Council officers to write to the proprietors identified in Point 1 to advise that Council requires confirmation in writing of their intention to continue to operate a parklet at the current location over the longer term, and any associated costs that may be passed on to shop owners. This confirmation must be provided within 1 month from the date of Council's notice.*
4) *Notes that officers will present a report at a future Council meeting no later than 31 October 2025 with advice on matters outlined in Points 2 and 3.*

Additionally, this report highlights an issue with respect to the parklet at "24 Spices" restaurant at 7/13 High Street, Bayswater. Council had resolved to remove a number of outdoor dining parklets including 24 Spices, as part of its 10 June 2025 resolution. All parklets have now been removed except 24 Spices following strong feedback from the proprietor that they now wish for the parklet to remain.

Officers have not acted to remove the 24 Spices parklet to date, noting their feedback. Should Council resolve to provide 'in-principle' support for the ongoing operation of Paddy's Tavern/ItalianIssimo and Schokolade/Studfield Charcoal Chicken parklet, it should consider offering the same to 24 Spices, noting that a final decision to allow a parklet to operate in any location is subject to separate statutory processes, and the officer recommendation is for the

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existing structure to be removed regardless of whether a future parklet is approved and operational.

This report advises of the potential pathways available to Council and/or the affected business owners to continue to operate a parklet at 34 Forest Road and 36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully and 213 Stud Road and 215 Stud Road, Wantirna South.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council:

1. Resolve to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets currently in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), ItalianIssimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South).
2. Note the processes outlined in this report to facilitate outdoor dining at the locations listed in Point 1.
3. Note the intermediary role Council is required to undertake to facilitate an on-road dining permit from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) in support of an outdoor dining parklet on Stud Road, Wantirna South.
4. Resolve to uphold its resolution from 10 June 2025 meeting to remove the existing outdoor dining parklet currently utilised by 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) and notes that any future outdoor dining at this location would require a Licence Agreement.

MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker
SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council:

1. Note the officers' recommendation to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), ItalianIssimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) based on the Building Inspection Report.
2. Resolve to extend the existing outdoor dining parklets currently in use as listed at Point 1 until 1 March 2026 to allow the proprietor(s) time to apply and progress an application for outdoor dining at the current locations through the relevant statutory processes.
3. Provide a further extension to allow the operation of the outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 1 after 1 March 2026 and until 1 June 2026, should that be required, subject to the proprietor(s) having lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
4. Instruct officers to commence the removal of the existing outdoor dining parklets from 2 March 2026 if the proprietor(s) have not lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
5. If an extension has been granted in accordance with point 3 until 1 June 2026, instruct officers to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 1 June 2026 irrespective of the status of the relevant statutory application unless all works to the parklet structures have been completed to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and/or Council's Building Surveyor.

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6. Request officers provide an update to Councillors by 13 February 2026 on progress on the statutory application and any compliance issues identified to date.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Duncan
SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Councillor Williams be permitted an extension of time to speak under Section 42 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

CARRIED

The substantive motion was put and LOST.

A Division was called by Councillor Baker

For the motion: Councillor Baker, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Considine and Councillor Cooper.

Against the motion: Councillor Kennett, Councillor Pearce, Councillor Lockwood, Councillor Williams and Councillor Duncan.

Abstention: Nil.

LOST 4:5

Councillor Lockwood left the meeting at 8:41pm and returned to the meeting at 8:45pm before the following vote on item 8.10.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams
SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council:

1. **Note the officers' recommendation to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), ItalianIssimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) based on the Building Inspection Report.**
2. **Resolve to extend the existing outdoor dining parklet currently in use by Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater), Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully) and ItalianIssimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully) until 1 March 2026 to allow the**

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respective proprietor(s) time to apply and progress an application for outdoor dining at the current locations through the relevant statutory processes.

3. **Provide a further extension to allow the operation of the outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 after 1 March 2026 and until 1 June 2026, should that be required, subject to the respective proprietor(s) having lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.**
4. **Instruct officers to commence the removal of the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 2 March 2026 if the respective proprietor(s) have not lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.**
5. **If an extension has been granted in accordance with point 4 until 1 June 2026, instruct officers to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 1 June 2026 irrespective of the status of the relevant statutory application unless all works to the parklet structures have been completed to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and/or Council's Building Surveyor.**
6. **Provide in-principle support for an outdoor dining parklet to benefit Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken at Stud Road, Wantirna South, noting that any outdoor dining provision in this location is subject to the Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP) approval.**
7. **Note that the proprietor(s) of Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken may apply to DTP via Council for approval to provide outdoor dining at the current parklet location and are responsible for costs associated with any statutory requirements to apply and establish outdoor dining benefiting their businesses.**
8. **Note that all proprietors are responsible for costs associated with any statutory requirements to apply and establish outdoor dining benefiting their businesses.**
9. **Request officers present a report to Council by end of April 2026 outlining a possible approach for a municipal-wide outdoor dining policy and potential timing to initiate the development of the policy.**

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: **Councillor Pearce**
SECONDED: **Councillor Duncan**

That Council adjourn the Meeting for 10 Minutes.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm and resumed at 9:20pm with all Councillors present except Councillor Pearce.

Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy

Procedure and Guidelines

This document has been prepared to assist Council in decision making and businesses applying for an Outdoor Dining Parklet permit.

It complements the Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy and provides the following:

Outdoor Dining Parklets Procedure **2**

Assessment Guidelines **5**

Application Requirements **8**

Outdoor Dining Parklets Procedure

1. Purpose

This Procedure outlines the process for applying for, assessing, approving, managing and monitoring Outdoor Dining Parklets on Council owned land such as carparks.

2. Eligibility

An applicant must:

- be a legally constituted entity;
- operate within the Knox municipality;
- be a hospitality business with a commercial lease agreement for the business premises that covers the duration of the proposed parklet lease period, or the owner of the property; and
- apply for a parklet associated with an existing business premises.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining and maintaining all permits, approvals, licences and consents required by Council and any other relevant authority.

3. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted in the form prescribed by Council and include all information and supporting documentation specified in 'Application Requirements'.

Council reserves the right not to assess an application until all required information has been provided and any applicable fees have been paid in full.

4. Preliminary Review

Upon receipt of an application, Council will undertake a preliminary review to confirm:

- applicant eligibility;
- completeness of the application; and
- submission of all required supporting documentation.

Where further information is required, Council may request additional details before progressing the application.

5. Assessment

Council will assess the application against the Outdoor Dining Parklets Policy and Assessment Guidelines.

As part of the assessment process, Council may:

- refer the application to relevant internal service units;
- seek advice from external agencies where required;
- request further information from the applicant; and
- undertake site inspections.

6. Consultation

Written evidence of support from affected adjacent businesses plus three other businesses in the shopping strip is required following application. Where Council considers further consultation necessary, the applicant may be required to participate in a consultation process as determined by Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Supporting evidence and/or consultation requirements also apply where a proposal:

- extends beyond the frontage of the applicant's premises;
- involves a shared or joint parklet arrangement; or
- may significantly affect neighbouring businesses or public amenity.

7. Determination

Following assessment, Council may:

- approve the application;
- approve the application subject to conditions; or
- refuse the application.

Applicants will be notified of Council's decision in writing.

8. Occupancy Agreement

Prior to occupying Council land, an approved applicant must:

- enter into an Occupancy Agreement or other agreement required by Council;
- pay all applicable fees and charges including the annual licence fee based on land valuation as determined by independent valuers[1].
- provide any required bond;
- maintain required insurance cover; and
- obtain any additional permits or approvals required for operation of the parklet.

Approvals are not transferable unless otherwise approved by Council.

9. Installation

A parklet must not be installed until all approvals have been obtained and any required agreements executed.

The occupier is responsible for all costs associated with the installation of the parklet and must ensure the structure is constructed in accordance with approved plans and any conditions imposed by Council.

10. Operation and Maintenance

The occupier is responsible for the ongoing operation, maintenance and safety of the parklet.

The occupier must:

- maintain the parklet in a safe and serviceable condition;
- keep the parklet and surrounding area clean and free of hazards;
- maintain required insurance and certifications;
- comply with all approval conditions; and
- seek and obtain Council approval prior to making material changes to the approved parklet.

11. Compliance and Monitoring

Council may monitor and inspect parklets at any time to assess compliance with approvals, conditions and legislative requirements.

Where non-compliance is identified, Council may require corrective action within a specified timeframe.

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[1] Current (2026) estimated annual licence fee may range between $1,740 - $2,700 per car parking space and subject to Council's market valuation.

12. Term of Occupancy Agreement, Renewal, Expiry and Termination

The initial term of the Occupancy Agreement may be for a 12-month period with a renewal option of a further 12 months. At the conclusion of the second 12-month period, a new application is required.

Council may review parklet approvals during the term of an Occupancy Agreement and before any renewal is granted.

Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew an approval where:

- approval conditions are breached;
- public safety concerns arise;
- required approvals or insurance are not maintained; or
- the parklet is no longer considered appropriate or in the public interest.

13. Removal and Site Reinstatement

Upon expiry, termination or revocation of an approval, the occupier must remove the parklet and reinstate the site in line with Council requirements.

Where an occupier fails to remove the parklet or reinstate the site, Council may undertake the work and recover costs in accordance with the Occupancy Agreement.

Assessment Guidelines

1. Purpose

These Guidelines support the Outdoor Dining Parklets Policy and assist Council in assessing applications for Outdoor Dining Parklets on Council land.

The Guidelines promote consistent decision-making and ensure that parklets contribute positively to business activation, public amenity, accessibility and community safety.

2. Assessment Principles

Council will assess applications in accordance with the following principles:

- Activation
  Supporting vibrant, attractive and economically active activity centres.
- Safety
  Protecting the safety of pedestrians, patrons, cyclists, motorists and the broader community.
- Accessibility
  Maintaining equitable access to public spaces and ensuring accessibility for people of all abilities.
- Amenity
  Protecting and enhancing the character, appearance and enjoyment of public places.
- Equity
  Providing fair and consistent access to opportunities for the use of public land.
- Good Governance
  Ensuring the use of public land delivers an appropriate public benefit and represents sound management of Council assets.

3. Location Assessment

Council will consider whether the proposed location is suitable for a parklet having regard to public safety, accessibility, transport operations and impacts on the surrounding area.

Council will not consider applications to locate outdoor dining parklets on other government agency owned land, other than Council.

Safety

Council will consider whether the proposal:

- Maintains safe movement for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Preserves sight lines at intersections, crossings and driveways.
- Maintains access for emergency services. Avoids conflicts between users of the public realm.

Council may request the applicant to submit a Traffic Management Plan and /or an independent Road Safety Audit by a suitably qualified auditor, where applicable, and comply with any other conditions to the satisfaction of Council to ensure the safety of patrons and pedestrians prior to determining.

Accessibility

Council will consider whether the proposal:

- Maintains clear and accessible pedestrian pathways.
- Supports access for people of all abilities.
- Complies with relevant accessibility requirements.

Traffic and Transport

Council will consider whether the proposal:

- Impacts traffic operations.
- Affects bus, taxi or loading zones.
- Reduces accessible parking opportunities.
- Creates adverse impacts on road users or public transport operations.

Parking Impacts

Council will consider:

- The number of parking spaces affected.
- Existing parking supply and demand.
- Impacts on surrounding businesses.
- Availability of alternative parking options.

4. Design Assessment

Outdoor Dining Parklets should positively contribute to the streetscape and surrounding public environment.

Council will consider whether the proposal:

- Is visually attractive and well-integrated with the surrounding area.
- Enhances the public realm.
- Uses durable and high-quality materials.
- Is appropriately scaled for the location.
- Includes appropriate safety measures.
- Maintains clear drainage access
- Minimises adverse impacts on neighbouring businesses and properties.

Parklets must be designed and constructed in accordance with relevant legislation, Australian Standards and Council requirements and evidenced by appropriate engineering certification.

Council does not support permanent roof structures over parklets due to engineering, construction and public infrastructure considerations.

5. Business and Community Impacts

Council will consider the impact of the proposal on neighbouring businesses and the wider community.

Considerations may include:

- Business visibility and accessibility.
- Noise and amenity impacts.
- Equity for surrounding businesses.
- Support from affected neighbouring businesses.
- Demonstrated public and community benefit.

Council may require the business owner to undertake consultation, where considered appropriate and in

line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

6. Joint and Extended Parklets

Joint Parklets

Council may support parklets shared by two or more businesses where:

- The arrangement improves utilisation of public space.
- Safety and traffic impacts can be adequately managed.
- Participating businesses demonstrate clear management and maintenance arrangements.

Extended Parklets

Council may support parklets extending beyond the applicant's frontage where:

- Adjacent businesses support the proposal. Consent evidenced in writing.
- Access, visibility and amenity are maintained.
- The proposal continues to deliver a public benefit.
- Loss of additional parking spaces is mitigated.

7. Operational Considerations

Council may consider the applicant's ability to safely manage and maintain the parklet throughout the Occupier Agreement period.

This may include consideration of:

- Maintenance arrangements including graffiti removal.
- Cleaning and waste management.
- Public liability insurance.
- Structural certification requirements.
- Previous compliance history.
- Management of alcohol service and associated approvals, where relevant.

8. Public Benefit

As parklets involve the occupation of public land for private business purposes, applicants must demonstrate a broader public benefit.

Examples of public benefit may include:

- Increased activity within activity centres.
- Improved streetscape presentation.
- Enhanced visitor and customer experience.
- Greater opportunities for social interaction.
- Economic activation and support for local businesses.

Council may refuse an application where the private benefit significantly outweighs the broader public benefit.

9. Assessment Teams

The application will be considered by teams representing:

- Strategic Infrastructure – Traffic.
- Community Laws.
- Planning and Building.
- Property management.
- Risk and Assurance.

Application Requirements

1. Purpose

This document outlines:

- Information and supporting documentation required for an applicant to apply for an outdoor dining parklet on Council land.
- Enable Council to assess an application for an Outdoor Dining Parklet.

Council may request additional information where required to properly assess a proposal.

2. Applicant Information

Applicants must provide:

- Business name
- Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Applicant name
- Business address
- Postal address (if different)
- Contact telephone number
- Email address
- Emergency contact details

3. Proposal Information

Applicants must provide details of the proposed parklet, including:

- Proposed location
- Number of parking spaces required
- Proposed operating hours
- Intended commencement date
- Description of the proposed use
- Details of any proposed shared or joint-use arrangements

4. Existing Approvals

Applicants must provide details of any approvals relevant to the proposal, including:

- Outdoor Dining Permit
- Planning Permit (where applicable)
- Liquor Licence (where applicable)
- Any other approval relevant to the use of the site

5. Site and Design Information

Applications must include:

- A scaled site plan showing the proposed parklet location and dimensions
- Details of adjacent properties and businesses
- Existing parking arrangements
- Footpath widths and pedestrian access routes
- Nearby infrastructure that may be affected by the proposal
- Design drawings, plans or elevations sufficient to explain the proposal
- Photographs of the existing site

Where requested by Council, applicants may also be required to provide visual representations of the proposed parklet.

6. Furniture and Fixtures

Applicants must provide a schedule of all proposed items to be located within the parklet, including:

- Tables
- Chairs
- Planters
- Umbrellas
- Screens or barriers
- Lighting
- Heaters
- Signage
- Any other furniture, fittings or fixtures

Refer Knox Website Street Trading and Outdoor Dining Permit Guidelines for cost

7. Safety and Accessibility Information

Applicants must demonstrate how the proposal will:

- Maintain safe pedestrian movement
- Provide equitable access
- Meet accessibility requirements
- Manage any identified risks associated with the proposal

Council may require a Traffic Management Plan or other supporting information where considered necessary.

8. Structural and Construction Information

Where applicable, applicants must provide:

- construction details
- engineering drawings
- structural certification from a suitably qualified professional
- details of proposed materials and finishes

Council may require additional certification prior to installation.

9. Insurance Requirements

Applicants must provide:

- A Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with a minimum cover of $20 million, noting location of parklet and Knox City Council as interested party
- Evidence of any additional insurance required by Council
- Insurance must be maintained for the duration of the approval period

10. Business and Community Support

Where required by Council, applicants must provide:

- Written support from affected adjacent businesses plus three other businesses in the shopping strip
- Evidence of consultation undertaken
- Details of any proposed shared management arrangements

11. Applicant Declaration

Applicants must declare that they:

- have provided accurate information;
- have read and understood the Outdoor Dining Parklets Policy, Procedure and Assessment Guidelines;
- will comply with any approval conditions imposed by Council;
- accept responsibility for parklet construction, installation, maintenance, operation and removal costs including costs incurred as a result of roadworks and or other emergencies requiring the temporary removal of the parklet structure;
- accept that Council reserves the right to undertake works at parklet locations having given prior notice to parklet operators, and that Council will not be held responsible for any revenue loss, as a result of the works;
- will maintain all required permits, licences, approvals and insurance; and
- agree to pay applicable fees and charges including annual license fees, based on land valuation as determined by independent valuers.

8.7 2027 Council Meeting Schedule

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Head of Governance, Saskia Weerheim
Manager: Manager Governance and Risk, Andrew Dowling
Executive: Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
This report presents the proposed schedule for Council Meetings for 2027 and considers proposed updates to two related Council policies: Council's Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy and the Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy.

The proposed 2027 Meeting Schedule has been developed having regard to the traditional meeting cycle established under the Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy, with some variations proposed to support the effective planning and conduct of Council's business throughout the year.

The report also proposes updates to the Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects current legislative requirements, contemporary meeting practices and the way Council's Meeting Schedule currently operates.

Updates to the Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy are also proposed to provide greater clarity and ensure the policy appropriately reflects current legislative requirements, technology and Council's approach to providing transparent and accessible public meetings.

Together, the proposed Meeting Schedule and policy updates are intended to provide a clear and contemporary framework for the planning, conduct and accessibility of Council meetings in 2027 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATIONS
That Council resolve to adopt the:
1. 2027 Council Meeting Schedule as set out in Attachment 1.
2. Revised Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy as set out in Attachment 2.
3. Revised Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy as set out in Attachment 4.

1. DISCUSSION

The schedule for meetings in 2027 has been prepared based on the traditional cycle as set out in Council's Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy, with some variations as outlined further in this report.

Additional meetings may also be scheduled throughout the year as and when required, and dates may be amended in accordance with Chapter 2, Part C of Council's Governance Rules.

In addition to presenting the proposed 2027 Meeting Schedule, this report considers proposed updates to the Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy and the Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy. The proposed updates are intended to ensure these policies remain fit for purpose, reflect

current legislative and regulatory requirements, and support contemporary meeting practices and the effective conduct of Council and public meetings.

1.1 Proposed Meeting Schedule 2027

The proposed schedule for 2027 is included in Attachment 1 and includes Council Meetings and Audit and Risk Committee Meetings. The schedule flags school holidays, public holidays and the Mayoral Election.

1.2 Council Meetings

Following is a discussion of departures from the usual cycle for Council Meetings impacting the 2027 schedule:

- In January, it is customary to commence the year with a Council Meeting, and in 2027, the Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, 27 January 2027 – noting that Tuesday 26 January 2027 is the Australia Day public holiday.
- In March, the Mid-Month Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 9 March 2027 to accommodate the Labour Day public holiday on Monday, 8 March 2027.
- In June, the King's Birthday public holiday is on Monday, 14 June 2027 and the Mid-Month Council Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, 15 June 2027 to accommodate this public holiday.
- In November, the Annual Meeting to elect the Mayor has been scheduled for Thursday, 18 November 2027 which aligns, as closely as practicable, to be held one year after the 2026 Mayoral Election Meeting (schedule on Thursday, 19 November 2026).
- In December, the last Council Meeting for the year is proposed for Monday 13 December 2027.

1.3 Policy Reviews

Two Council policies are relevant to the conduct of Council and Issues Briefing Meetings: the Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy, which establishes the framework that underpins this report, and the Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy.

Both policies have undergone a targeted review to ensure they remain current, fit for purpose and aligned with Council's current meeting practices and legislative requirements. Both policies have been transferred to Council's new policy template, with typographical and numbering corrections and relevant references updated, including references to the current Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The key changes arising from the reviews are outlined separately below.

1.3.1 Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy

The Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy was last reviewed by Council in 2023. This Policy sets the meeting cycle for Council. The following changes have been proposed to this Policy:

- Addition of a **Context** section to ensure alignment with other Council policies and clarify the policy's role within Council's broader governance framework.
- Addition of the **Issues Briefing** Meeting after the Mid-Month Council Meeting in the Meeting Cycle table.
- Removal of reference to **delegated committees** of Council.

- Expansion of the Issues Briefing provisions to provide greater clarity for Councillors, officers and community about their role as information, discussion and feedback forums, and reinforce the independence of subsequent advice and decision-making for all parties.

The Policy already provides a framework for the operation of Issues Briefings and is the only formal Council document that establishes structure and guidance for this meeting forum. Further provisions have been proposed to provide greater clarity and consistency, incorporating established Council practice alongside relevant legislative requirements on the conduct of Issues Briefings.

As previously noted, other minor changes have been made to update the Policy – see track marked changes in Attachment 3.

1.3.2 Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy

Live streaming of Council Meetings commenced in early 2020 in line with a Council decision in September 2019. The Policy was introduced to provide a clear framework for Councillors and officers to support the implementation of live streaming of Council meetings, which improved the accessibility of Council decision-making. It provided guidance for managing the privacy, legal and other risks arising from recording and broadcasting meetings.

Livestreaming has since become an established mechanism for providing public access to Council meetings and supporting transparency and accountability.

The Policy is due for review this month with the following changes proposed to this Policy:

- **Changing the name** of the Policy from Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy to Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy to accurately reflect previous changes to Council's meeting structure.
- Resulting **changes in language** from public meeting to Council meeting to accurately reflect Council's meeting structure.
- Removal of reference to **delegated committees** of Council.
- Inclusion of a reference to **hybrid meetings** to accurately reflect current practice, as enabled in Council's Governance Rules.
- Updating section 4.1 on **confidential business** to refer to the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 2020, and to distinguish between confidential business considered during a meeting and at the conclusion of a meeting, with livestreaming paused or ceased accordingly.
- Updating section 4.5 on **inappropriate material** to require the CEO to consult with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or another Councillor (where appropriate) when determining how to manage a meeting recording containing inappropriate material.

As previously noted, other minor changes have been made to update the Policy to reflect current language and legislation; see track marked changes in Attachment 5.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Council's Executive Leadership Team has been consulted in the preparation of the 2027 Meeting Schedule.

Once adopted by the Council, the Schedule of Council Meetings will be communicated to the community via Council's website.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Meeting Schedule and policy updates have positive social implications by supporting transparent, accessible, and inclusive participation in Council decision-making. Maintaining a predictable meeting cycle and clear arrangements for Council meetings and livestreaming will assist the community to understand when they can engage with Council, while updated policies will support contemporary approaches to accessibility and public participation.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

There are no climate change considerations associated with this report.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and resource implications are considered to be within Council's existing budget.

7. RISKS

Council Meeting Schedule

Setting the 2027 Council Meeting Schedule in advance mitigates risk and promotes good governance and effective decision-making. With agreed timelines in place, Council, Councillors and officers can plan efficiently, ensure transparency, and avoid delays that may otherwise affect the timely delivery of commitments.

A clear and predictable schedule also mitigates risks to Councillor wellbeing and sustainable workload management. By locking in meeting times, Councillors can better plan and manage their responsibilities and commitments in the interests of a healthy work-life balance.

Policy Reviews

Council has a low appetite for Legal and Regulatory Risk and a low, trending towards medium, appetite for Reputation Risk.

The revised Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy supports these settings by enabling the reputational benefits of openness and transparency while establishing appropriate controls for privacy, confidentiality, inappropriate content and other legal and reputational exposures.

The revised Policy appropriately manages the risks associated with live streaming without unnecessarily limiting the transparency and accessibility that livestreaming is intended to provide.

The revised Meeting Structures and Cycle Policy supports these settings by establishing a clear framework for Council's formal decision-making forums and Issues Briefings, including their respective purpose, authority and operation, supporting transparent and accountable decision-making while maintaining appropriate governance controls.

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.

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 - Draft 2027 Council Meeting Schedule [**8.7.1** - 1 page]
2. Attachment 2 - Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy Clean [**8.7.2** - 4 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy - Track Marked [**8.7.3** - 5 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy - Clean [**8.7.4** - 5 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - Live Streaming of Public Meetings Policy - Track Marked [**8.7.5** - 6 pages]

2027 Council and Issues Briefing Meeting Schedule

Day	Date	Time	Meeting
JANUARY			
Tuesday, 26 January 2027: Australia Day Public Holiday			
Wednesday	27 January 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
FEBRUARY			
Monday	8 February 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	22 February 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
MARCH			
Monday, 8 March 2027: Labour Day Public Holiday			
Tuesday	9 March 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	22 March 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
Monday, 29 March 2027: Easter Monday Public Holiday			
School Holidays: 29 March 2027 – 9 April 2027			
APRIL			
Monday	12 April 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	26 April 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
MAY			
Monday	10 May 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	24 May 2027	7.00 pm	Council
JUNE			
Monday, 14 June 2027: King's Birthday Public Holiday			
Tuesday	15 June 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	28 June 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
School Holidays: 28 June 2027 – 9 July 2027			
JULY			
Monday	12 July 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	26 July 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
AUGUST			
Monday	9 August 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	23 August 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
SEPTEMBER			
Monday	13 September 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
School Holidays: 20 September 2027 - 1 October 2027			
Monday	27 September 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
OCTOBER			
Monday	11 October 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Monday	25 October 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
NOVEMBER			
Tuesday 2 November 2027: Melbourne Cup Day Public Holiday			
Monday	8 November 2027	7.00 pm	Mid-Month Council Meeting
Thursday	18 November 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting (for the Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor)
Monday	22 November 2027	7.00 pm	Council Meeting
DECEMBER			
Monday	13 December 2027	7.00pm	Council Meeting
School Holidays commence on Monday 20 December 2027			

Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy

Policy Number:	2003/27	**Directorate:**	Customer and Performance
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Governance and Risk
Approval Date:	Council Meeting Date	**Version Number:**	9
Review Date:	3 years from date of approval		

1. Purpose

This purpose of this Policy is to document the cycle of formal decision-making forums and Issues Briefing meetings attended by Councillors.

2. Context

The Local Government Act 2020 establishes requirements for the conduct and operation of Council meetings, with Council's Governance Rules providing the framework for meeting procedures and decision-making. This Policy establishes Council's annual meeting cycle for Council Meetings and Issues Briefings, providing a clear and consistent schedule to support effective planning, decision-making and transparency. The meeting cycle is designed to support Council in meeting its statutory and governance obligations, while providing sufficient opportunity for Councillors to consider matters and receive information before decisions are required.

3. Scope

This Policy relates to the following Councillor meeting forums:

1. Council Meetings; and
2. Issues Briefing meetings.

4. Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy

Council will establish a schedule of Council meetings annually in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Until such time as Council resolves otherwise:

- The schedule shall be prepared on the basis of the following cycle with such alterations as Council considers necessary to accommodate public holidays and the other business of Council and Councillors:

Day of the Month	Meeting Type
First Monday of the month	Issues Briefing Meeting
Second Monday of the month	Mid-month Council Meeting; followed by Issues Briefing Meeting
Third Monday of the month	Issues Briefing Meeting
Fourth Monday of the month	Council Meeting

- The annual schedule shall include a Council Meeting called in accordance with the Local Government Act and Council's Governance Rules for the election of the Mayor, and such a meeting may also include (but is not limited to):
    - The election of a deputy Mayor;
    - Appointment of Councillors to various Council and external Committees; and
    - Taking the Oath/Affirmation of Office.
- The form and content of reports to the above meetings shall, subject to any resolution of Council, be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with Councillors.

4.1 Council Meetings:

Council Meetings are the pre-eminent decision-making forum of Council and can consider any matter under Council's jurisdiction, by or under any legislation or regulation.

Council Meetings:

a) Will be scheduled in accordance with Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

b) Will consider such business as determined in accordance with:
    - The Local Government Act 2020; and
    - Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

c) Will be conducted in a formal meeting environment and in accordance with:
    - The Local Government Act 2020 including the relevant provisions of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct; and
    - Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

4.2 Issues Briefing Meeting

Issues Briefing Meetings provide an informal meeting forum for Councillors, Executive Leadership Team and Council officers to facilitate an information exchange and communication.

Issues Briefing Meetings:

a) Are intended to be a confidential forum and all papers prepared for and considered, and the content of discussions held, should be treated as confidential.

b) Are held for the purpose of:

- Ensuring Councillors are well informed and in the best possible position to debate issues effectively once matters come into a decision-making forum.
- Enabling officers to understand Councillors' perspectives on issues presented and receive feedback or questions that officers may consider when preparing reports for decision making forums; or when making decisions under delegation.
- Receiving informal deputations or presentations from external parties in exceptional circumstances that fulfil the purposes above.

c) Are not decision-making forums and must not be used to make, determine or effectively predetermine decisions that are properly made by Council or by officers exercising delegated authority. Accordingly:

- Councillors cannot direct officers in the exercise of delegated powers, functions or duties, or in the advice they provide, and remain free to form and express their views when subsequently considering and determining a matter as Council; and
- Officers will consider feedback provided at an Issues Briefing but remain responsible for exercising their own professional judgement when exercising delegated authority or providing advice, and are not bound by, and may disagree with, views expressed at an Issues Briefing.

d) Will be held in an informal environment and not subject to the procedural formalities of Council's Governance Rules.

e) Are subject to all provisions of the Local Government Act 2020 including the relevant provisions of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

f) Will be chaired by the Mayor. Where the Mayor is unavailable or unable to chair the meeting, meetings will be chaired by the Deputy Mayor, or such other Councillor as nominated by the Mayor.

g) Will generally be expected to commence at 6.45pm and be of a maximum 2-2.5 hours duration.

5. References

5.1 Community and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly
Strategy 4.1: Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

5.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020

5.3 Charter of Human Rights

This policy has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

5.4 Related Council Policies

- Governance Rules
- Council Committee Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct

5.5 Related Council documents

- Council Report Writing Guide

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
CEO	means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
Council	means Knox City Council.
Council Meeting	means a Council meeting as defined by the Local Government Act 2020 and convened according to Council's Governance Rules.
Issues Briefing	means a regular, scheduled meetings for all Councillors held for the purposes as set out in this Policy.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Executive Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments, minor amendment to legislation, or changes that do not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy

Policy Number:	2003/27	**Directorate:**	Customer and Performance
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Governance and Risk
Approval Date:	~~25 September 2023~~Council Meeting Date	**Version Number:**	~~9~~8
Review Date:	~~25 September 2026~~3 years from date of approval		

1. Purpose

This purpose of this ~~p~~Policy is to document the cycle of formal ~~decision-making~~decision-making forums and Issues Briefing meetings attended by Councillors.

2. Context

The Local Government Act 2020 establishes requirements for the conduct and operation of Council meetings, with Council's Governance Rules providing the framework for meeting procedures and decision-making. This Policy establishes Council's annual meeting cycle for Council Meetings and Issues Briefings, providing a clear and consistent schedule to support effective planning, decision-making and transparency. The meeting cycle is designed to support Council in meeting its statutory and governance obligations, while providing sufficient opportunity for Councillors to consider matters and receive information before decisions are required.

~~2.~~3. Scope

This Policy relates to ~~Council's decision-making~~the following Councillor meeting forums:

1. Council Meetings; and
2. Issues Briefing meetings.

~~3.~~4. Meeting Structure and Cycle Policy

Council will establish a schedule of Council meetings ~~and Delegated Committee meetings~~ annually in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Until such time as Council resolves otherwise:

- The schedule shall be prepared on the basis of the following cycle with such alterations as Council considers necessary to accommodate public~~–~~ holidays and the other business of Council and Councillors:

Day of the Month	Meeting Type
First Monday of the month	Issues Briefing Meeting
Second Monday of the month	Mid-month Council Meeting; followed by Issues Briefing Meeting
Third Monday of the month	Issues Briefing Meeting
Fourth Monday of the month	~~Monthly~~ Council Meeting

- The annual schedule shall include a Council Meeting called in accordance with ~~section 26 of the LGA~~the Local Government Act and Council's Governance Rules for the election of the Mayor, and such a meeting may also include (but is not limited to):
    - The election of a deputy Mayor;
    - Appointment of Councillors to various Council and external Committees; and
    - Taking the Oath/Affirmation of Office.

- The form and content of reports to the above meetings shall, subject to any resolution of Council, be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with Councillors.

4.1 Council Meetings:

Council Meetings are the pre-eminent decision-making forum of Council and can consider any matter under Council's jurisdiction, by or under any legislation or regulation.

Council Meetings:

a) Will be scheduled in accordance with Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

b) Will consider such business as determined in accordance with:
    - The Local Government Act 2020; and
    - Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

c) Will be conducted in a formal meeting environment and in accordance with:
    - The Local Government Act 2020 including the relevant provisions of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct; and
    - Council's Governance Rules as adopted from time to time.

4.2 Issues Briefing Meeting

Issues Briefing Meetings provide an informal meeting forum for Councillors, Executive Leadership Team~~MT~~ and ~~other staff~~Council officers to facilitate an information exchange and communication.

Issues Briefing Meetings:

~~a) Have no delegated authority to make decisions on Council's behalf, or direct officers in the exercise of their delegation powers, or discharge of their delegated functions and duties.~~

~~b)~~a) Are intended to be a confidential forum and all papers prepared for and considered, and the content of discussions held, should be treated as confidential.

~~c)~~b) Are held for the purpose of:

- Ensuring Councillors are well informed and in the best possible position to debate issues effectively once matters come into a decision-making forum.
- Enabling officers to understand Councillors' perspectives on issues presented and receive feedback or questions that officers may consider when preparing reports for decision making forums; or when making decisions under delegation.
- Receiving informal deputations or presentations from external parties in exceptional circumstances that fulfil the purposes above.

c) Are not decision-making forums and must not be used to make, determine or effectively predetermine decisions that are properly made by Council or by officers exercising delegated authority. Accordingly:

- Councillors cannot direct officers in the exercise of delegated powers, functions or duties, or in the advice they provide, and remain free to form and express their views when subsequently considering and determining a matter as Council; and
- Officers will consider feedback provided at an Issues Briefing but remain responsible for exercising their own professional judgement when exercising delegated authority or providing advice, and are not bound by, and may disagree with, views expressed at an Issues Briefing.

d) Will be held in an informal environment and not subject to the procedural formalities of Council's Governance Rules.

e) Are subject to all provisions of the Local Government Act 2020 including the relevant provisions of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

f) Will be chaired by the Mayor. Where the Mayor is unavailable or unable to chair the meeting, meetings will be chaired by the Deputy Mayor, or such other Councillor as nominated by the Mayor.

g) Will generally be expected to commence at 6.~~30~~45pm and be of a maximum 2-2.5 hours duration.

~~4.~~5. References

5.1 Community and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly

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

~~**4.1 Council Plan 2021-2025**~~

~~**Civic engagement and integrity**~~

~~**Strategy 5.3 – Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.**~~

~~4.~~2~~5.~~2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020

~~4.~~3~~5.~~3 Charter of Human Rights

This policy has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

~~4.~~4~~5.~~4 Related Council Policies

- Governance Rules
- Council Committee Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct

~~4.~~5~~5.~~5 Related Council documents

- Council Report Writing Guide

~~5.~~6. Definitions

Term	Definition
CEO	means the Chief Executive Officer of Knox City Council.
Council	means Knox City Council.
Council Meeting	means a~~A~~ Council meeting as defined ~~by Section 61 of the~~by the Local Government Act 2020 ~~LGA~~ and convened according to Council's Governance Rules.
~~Delegated Committee Meeting~~	~~A meeting of a Delegated Committee meeting as defined by Section 63 of the LGA and convened according to Council's Governance Rules.~~
Issues Briefing	means a ~~R~~regular, scheduled meetings for all Councillors held for the purposes as set out in this Policy.
~~EMT~~	~~means the Executive Management Team.~~

~~LGA~~ ~~Local Government Act 2020~~

~~6.~~7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Executive Officer. 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, or changes ~~that~~ that do~~es~~ not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

Live Streaming of Council Meetings Policy

Policy Number:	2019/10	**Directorate:**	Customer and Performance
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Governance and Risk
Approval Date:	Meeting Date	**Version Number:**	2
Review Date:	3 Years from Meeting Date		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Affirm Council's commitment to transparent and accessible decision making; and
- Set out the requirements for the recording, live streaming and archiving of Council meetings.

2. Context

Council meetings are a forum for decision making and, while written minutes capture the decisions and other outputs of these meetings, they do not generally reflect the deliberations or debate.The recording and live streaming of Council meetings ensure that the robust decision making in the Council Chamber is accessible to all interested members of the public, rather than just those who attend meetings.

Increased community awareness of Council's decision-making process can promote confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision makers and the Council.

Council's Governance Rules provide the procedures governing the conduct of Council meetings. Council's Governance Rules prohibit a person from recording or broadcasting a meeting without the consent of the Mayor or Chairperson, or a resolution of the meeting.

3. Scope

Council's Governance Rules allow for meetings to be held wholly in person, wholly by electronic means, or partially in person and partially by electronic means (also known as a 'hybrid' meeting).

This Policy applies to:

- Councillors, officers, contractors, volunteers and members of the public who attend Council meetings whether in person or by electronic means.
- Live streams and recordings made of Council meetings whether held in person or by electronic means.

4. Council Policy

All Council meetings will be live streamed and recorded for viewing at a later date via Council's website.

The Chief Executive Officer may authorise the live streaming of events held in the Council Chamber or applicable function rooms outside the operation of this policy.

4.1 Confidential Business

If Council resolves to close a public meeting to members of the public in accordance with section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act, live streaming will be paused for the duration of the confidential business where the meeting will subsequently reopen to the public. Where the confidential business occurs at the end of the meeting and there is no other business remaining on the agenda, live streaming may cease.

Council officers may continue to operate a recording device for the purpose of production of the minutes of the meeting. Subject to any relevant laws, a recording of a confidential meeting must not be published by Council or its service provider, or otherwise released to the public, and should be destroyed once the confidential minutes have been produced.

4.2 Privacy and Notice of Live Streaming

Where a Council meeting is to be live streamed and recorded, reasonable notice must be given, including where practicable, on the agenda for the meeting, and on any invitations and/or promotional material for the meeting including on Council's relevant website/social media channels.

Signs notifying the public that the meeting is being live streamed and recorded must also be placed at various highly visible locations within the Civic Centre.

As soon as practicable during a Council meeting, the Chairperson will advise those in attendance that the meeting is being live streamed and that a video and audio recording will be published on Council's website.

The standard positioning of the cameras are intended to only capture the Councillors, Council's Executive Leadership Team and Governance staff seated at the Council table. While Council has endeavoured not to capture visual images of members of the gallery or other staff present at a Council meeting, it is possible that members of the public gallery and Council officers may be incidentally captured on the live stream and recording.

Members of the public who address a public meeting during public question time will be heard and may be seen on the live stream and any audio and video captured will be in the recording. Additional notice regarding live streaming will therefore be included on all public question time forms.

By attending a Council meeting, attendees will be taken as having consented to their image, speech or statements being live streamed and published on Council's website.

If a member of the public does not wish to be filmed or recorded, they may contact a Council officer to discuss alternative options prior to the Council meeting.

If a member of staff does not wish to be filmed or recorded they should discuss their concerns with their respective Manager, member of the Executive Leadership Team , or the Chief Executive Officer.

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4.3 Access to Recordings of Meetings

Recordings of all Council meetings will be processed by Council's service provider and, in ordinary circumstances, made available for viewing within two (2) working days of the meeting.

Recordings of Council meetings will generally be available through Council's website and for a minimum of two (2) years.

Viewing live or recorded audio and video over the internet consumes data. Public meetings are often hours long, consequently viewing the live stream or recordings over the internet can consume large amounts of data. The user is responsible for any charges that a service provider may impose for data usage, particularly over a mobile internet connection.

Council will make reasonable efforts to ensure the availability of a live stream and recording of a Council meeting. However, there may be instances where they are not available, due to technical difficulties. Technical issues may include, but are not limited to, the availability of the internet, network or device failure or malfunction, unavailability of the website or power outages. There may also be other, non-technical circumstances that prevent the live streaming or recording of meetings.

Council takes no responsibility for and accepts no liability in the event that live streaming of a meeting, a recording of a meeting, or Council's website is unavailable.

4.4 Licence and Use of Recordings

Access to live streams and recordings of public meetings is provided on Council's website for personal and non-commercial use. Video, images and audio contained in a live stream or recording of a Council meeting or event must not be altered, reproduced or republished without the permission of Council.

Copyright of all recordings remains with Council.

4.5 Inappropriate Material

Council meetings are a forum of statements, debate, questions and answers and there is a risk that contributions made by Councillors, officers or the public may include inappropriate material. Such contributions are not protected or privileged, and Councillors, employees and members of the public may therefore be the subject of legal proceedings in relation to statements they make.

The live streaming of Council meetings and the publishing of any recordings made increases the potential audience, and the potential risks associated with publishing inappropriate material.

Councillors, Council officers and members of the public are solely responsible for their own comments which are live streamed and/or recorded and therefore may be liable for any loss or damage they cause.

Opinions expressed and statements made during a Council meeting are those of the individuals making them, and not those of Council. Unless set out in a resolution of Council, Council does not endorse or support the views, opinions, standards, or information that may be expressed by individuals at a Council meeting and which may be contained in a live stream or recording of a Council meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Mayor or, where appropriate, the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor, may determine to either not publish the recording of a meeting or publish an edited version, where they believe that a recording contains inappropriate material. Notice of such a decision will be published on Council's website.

4.6 Termination of Live Streaming

Council is responsible for the act of publishing the material on Council's website and therefore may be liable for any loss and/or damage caused to a person due to the publishing of the inappropriate material.

Consequently, the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer have the discretion and the authority at any time, to direct the termination or interruption of the live streaming of a Council meeting if they consider the content or conduct of the meeting has, or is likely to, cause the live streaming of inappropriate information.

In addition, the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer have the discretion and the authority at any time, to direct the termination or interruption of the live streaming of a Council meeting if they consider there has been, is, or is likely to be:

- a risk or threat to public health and safety or the health and safety of an individual;
- a threat of violence or aggression by one or more people attending the meeting against others;
- unlawful conduct by an attendee of the meeting;
- significant disruption of the meeting by the conduct of an attendee; and/or
- a reputational risk to the Council.

4.7 Standing of Live Streams/Recordings

Endorsed Council minutes provide the definitive record of Council's resolutions at Council meetings.

Viewers should exercise caution before using or relying upon information or statements provided in a live stream or recording of a Council meeting.

Draft

5. References

5.1 Community and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly
Strategy 4.1: Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

5.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Freedom of Information Act 1982

5.3 Charter of Human Rights

This policy has been assessed against and is consistent with the charter of Human Rights.

5.4 Related Council Policies and Procedures

- Governance Rules
- Amenity Local Law
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Public Transparency Policy

6. Definitions

Chairperson	means the Chairperson of the Meeting and includes an acting, temporary or substitute Chairperson.
Civic Offices	Council's offices at 511 Burwood Hwy Wantirna South
Confidential meeting	means a meeting which has been closed to members of the public under section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020.
Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Event	means an activity, presentation, forum or celebration organised and hosted by Knox City Council.
Inappropriate Material	means material considered to be: • defamatory; • an infringement of copyright; • a breach of privacy; • offensive; • vilification or inciting hatred; • discriminatory; and/or • confidential or privileged.
Live Stream	means the transmission of live audio visual coverage of a event over the Internet.
Officer	means a person employed by Knox City Council, including the Chief Executive Officer, members of the Executive Leadership Team,. , Managers and any person engaged as a short term employee or a contractor undertaking duties on behalf of Council.
Recording	means the saving of the live stream.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of 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, or changes that do not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

Live Streaming of Council~~Public~~ Meetings Policy

Policy Number:	2019/10	**Directorate:**	~~Corporate Services~~Customer and Performance
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Governance and Risk
Approval Date:	Meeting Date	**Version Number:**	2~~1~~
Review Date:	3 ~~3~~ Years from Meeting Date		

~~4.1~~1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- A~~a~~ffirm Council's commitment to transparent and accessible decision making; and
- S~~s~~et out the requirements for the recording, live streaming and archiving of ~~Ordinary and Special~~ Council meetings ~~and Special Committee meetings~~.

~~4.2~~2. Context

Council ~~and Special Committee~~ meetings are a forum for decision making and, while written minutes capture the decisions and other outputs of these meetings, they do not generally reflect the deliberations or debate.

The recording and live streaming of ~~public~~ Council meetings ~~will~~ ensure that the robust decision making in the Council Chamber is accessible to all interested members of the public, rather than just those who attend meetings.

Increased community awareness of Council's ~~decision making~~decision-making process can promote confidence in the integrity and accountability of the decision makers and the Council.

Council's Governance Rules~~The Meeting Procedure and Use of Common Seal Local Law 2018 (Local Law)~~ provide~~s~~ the procedures governing the conduct of Council ~~and Special Committee~~ meetings. ~~Section 65 of the Local Law~~Council's Governance Rules prohibit~~s~~ a person from recording or broadcasting a meeting without the consent of the Mayor or Chairperson, or a resolution of the meeting. ~~A resolution enabling the recording and broadcasting of meetings, effective from the first quarter of 2020, was passed at the Ordinary Council meeting on 23 September 2019~~

~~4.3~~3. Scope

Council's Governance Rules allow for meetings to be held wholly in person, wholly by electronic means, or partially in person and partially by electronic means (also known as a 'hybrid' meeting).

This Ppolicy applies to:

- Councillors, officers, contractors, volunteers and members of the public who attend ~~Ordinary and Special~~ Council meetings ~~and Special Committee meetings~~ whether in person or by electronic means.
- Live streams and recordings made of ~~Ordinary and Special~~ Council meetings whether held in person or by electronic means ~~and Special Committee meetings at the Civic Centre~~.

~~6.~~4. Council Policy

All ~~public~~ Council meetings will be live streamed ~~live~~ and recorded for viewing at a later date via Council's website.

The Chief Executive Officer may authorise the live streaming of events held in the Council Chamber or applicable function rooms outside the operation of this policy.

~~7.~~4.1 Confidential Business ~~Public Meetings~~

~~If a Council or Special Committee has resolved that a public meeting be closed to members of the public in accordance with section 89(2) of the Act, live streaming of that meeting will cease.~~If Council resolves to close a public meeting to members of the public in accordance with section 66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act, live streaming will be paused for the duration of the confidential business where the meeting will subsequently reopen to the public. Where the confidential business occurs at the end of the meeting and there is no other business remaining on the agenda, live streaming may cease.

Council officers may continue to operate a recording device for the purpose of production of the minutes of the meeting. Subject to any relevant laws, a recording of a confidential meeting must not be published by Council or its service provider, or otherwise released to the public, and should be destroyed once the confidential minutes have been produced.

~~8.~~4.2 Privacy and Notice of Live Streaming

Where a ~~public~~ Council meeting is to be live streamed and recorded, reasonable notice must be given, including where practicable, on the agenda for the meeting, and on any invitations and/or promotional material for the meeting including on Council's relevant website/social media channels.

Signs notifying the public that the meeting is being live streamed and recorded must also be placed at various highly visible locations within the Civic Centre.

As soon as practicable during a Council~~public~~ meeting, the Chairperson will advise those in attendance that the meeting is being live streamed and that a video and audio recording will be published on Council's website.

The standard positioning of the cameras are intended to only capture the Councillors, Council's Executive ~~Management~~ Leadership Team and Governance staff seated at the Council table. While Council has endeavoured not to capture visual images of members of the gallery or other staff present at a ~~public~~ Council meeting, it is possible that members of the public gallery and Council officers may be incidentally captured on the live stream and recording.

Members of the public who address a public meeting during public question time will be heard and may be seen on the live stream and any audio and video captured will be in the recording. Additional notice regarding live streaming will therefore be included on all public question time forms.

By attending a Council meeting, attendees will be taken as having consented to their image, speech or statements being live streamed and published on Council's website.

If a member of the public does not wish to be filmed or recorded, they may contact a Council officer to discuss alternative options prior to the ~~public meeting or event~~Council meeting.

If a member of staff does not wish to be filmed or recorded they should discuss their concerns with their respective Manager, ~~Executive Manager or~~ member of the Executive Leadership Team ~~Director~~, or the Chief Executive Officer.

~~9.~~4.3 Access to Recordings of Meetings

Recordings of all Council~~public~~ meetings will be processed by Council's service provider and, in ordinary circumstances, made available for viewing within two (2) working days of the meeting.

Recordings of Council~~public~~ meetings will generally be available through Council's website and for a minimum of two (2) years.

Viewing live or recorded audio and video over the internet consumes data. Public meetings are often hours long, consequently viewing the live stream or recordings over the internet can consume large amounts of data. The user is responsible for any charges that a service provider may impose for data usage, particularly over a mobile internet connection.

Council will make reasonable effort~~s~~ to ensure the availability of a live stream and recording of a ~~public~~ Council meeting. However, there may be instances where they are not available, due to technical difficulties. Technical issues may include, but are not limited to, the availability of the internet, network or device failure or malfunction, unavailability of the website or power outages. There may also be other, non-technical circumstances that prevent the live streaming or recording of meetings.

Council takes no responsibility for and accepts no liability in the event that live streaming of a meeting, a recording of a meeting, or Council's website is unavailable.

~~10.~~4.4 Licence and Use of Recordings

Access to live streams and recordings of public meetings is provided on Council's website for personal and non-commercial use. Video, images and audio contained in a live stream or recording of a Council meeting or event must not be altered, reproduced or republished without the permission of Council.

Copyright of all recordings remains with Council.

~~11.~~4.5 Inappropriate Material

~~Public~~ Council meetings are a forum of statements, debate, questions and answers and there is a risk that contributions made by Councillors, officers or the public may include inappropriate material. Such contributions are not protected or privileged, and Councillors, employees and members of the public may therefore be the subject of legal proceedings in relation to statements they make.

The live streaming of Council~~public~~ meetings and the publishing of any recordings made increases the

potential audience, and the potential risks associated with publishing inappropriate material.

Councillors, Council officers and members of the public are solely responsible for their own comments which are live streamed and/or recorded and therefore may be liable for any loss or damage they cause.

Opinions expressed and statements made during a Council meeting are those of the individuals making them, and not those of Council. Unless set out in a resolution of Council, Council does not endorse or support the views, opinions, standards, or information that may be expressed by individuals at a Council~~public~~ meeting and which may be contained in a live stream or recording of a Council~~public~~ meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Mayor or, where appropriate, the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor, may determine to either not publish the recording of a meeting or publish an edited version, where they believe that a recording contains inappropriate material. Notice of such a decision will be published on Council's website.

~~12.~~4.6 Termination of Live Streaming

Council is responsible for the act of publishing the material on Council's website and therefore may be liable for any loss and/or damage caused to a person due to the publishing of the inappropriate material.

Consequently, the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer have the discretion and the authority at any time, to direct the termination or interruption of the live streaming of a ~~public~~ Council meeting if they consider the content or conduct of the meeting has, or is likely to, cause the live streaming of inappropriate information.

In addition, the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer have the discretion and the authority at any time, to direct the termination or interruption of the live streaming of a Council ~~public~~ meeting if they consider there has been, is, or is likely to be:

- a risk or threat to public health and safety or the health and safety of an individual;
- a threat of violence or aggression by one or more people attending the meeting against others;
- unlawful conduct by an attendee of the meeting;
- significant disruption of the meeting by the conduct of an attendee; and/or
- a reputational risk to the Council.

~~13.~~4.7 Standing of Live Streams/Recordings

Endorsed Council minutes provide the definitive record of Council's resolutions at ~~Ordinary or Special~~ Council meetings~~, and Special Committee meetings~~.

Viewers should exercise caution before using or relying upon information or statements provided in a live stream or recording of a Council meeting.

~~4.4~~5. References

~~4.1~~5.1 **Community and Health and Wellbeing~~& Council~~ Plan 20~~17-2021~~25-2029**
~~Goal 8 – We have confidence in decision making~~Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly

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

~~4.2~~5.2 **Relevant Legislation**

- Local Government Act 2020~~1989~~
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Freedom of Information Act 1982

~~4.3~~5.3 **Charter of Human Rights**

- This policy has been assessed against and is consistent with the charter of Human Rights.

~~4.4~~5.4 **Related Council Policies and Procedures**

- ~~Meeting Procedure and Use of Common Seal Local Law 2018~~Governance Rules
- Amenity Local Law
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy
- Public Transparency Policy

~~4.5 Related Council Procedures~~

- ~~Nil~~

~~4.5~~6. Definitions

Chairperson	means the Chairperson of the Meeting and includes an acting, temporary or substitute Chairperson.
Civic Offices	Council's offices at 511 Burwood Hwy Wantirna South
Confidential meeting	means a meeting which has been closed to members of the public under section ~~89(2~~66 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020~~1989~~.
Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Event	means an activity, presentation, forum or celebration organised and hosted by Knox City Council.
Inappropriate Material	means material considered to be: • defamatory; • an infringement of copyright; • a breach of privacy; • offensive; • vilification or inciting hatred; • discriminatory; and/or

	• confidential or privileged.
Live Stream	means the transmission of live audio visual coverage of a event over the Internet.
Officer	means a person employed by Knox City Council, including the Chief Executive Officer, members of the Executive Leadership Team,. ~~Directors~~, Managers and any person engaged as a short term employee or a contractor undertaking duties on behalf of Council.
~~Public Meeting~~	~~means an Ordinary Meeting or a Special Meeting of Council or a Special Committee meeting that is open is open to the public.~~
Recording	means the saving of the live stream.

~~4.6~~7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of 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, or changes that do~~es~~ not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

8.8 Ferntree Gully Cemetery - Masterplan Progression

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Head of Governance, Saskia Weerheim
Manager: Manager Governance and Risk, Andrew Dowling
Executive: Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
The Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan provides a long-term framework for the staged development of the Cemetery, increasing memorialisation capacity, responding to community demand and importantly, supporting its financial sustainability. A copy of the recommendations from the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan adopted by Council in December 2025 are included at Attachment 1. A precinct-based approach has been adopted to implement the Masterplan, with the Foothills area identified as the first priority as it provides the most straightforward opportunity to commence construction, including proposed niche walls at the rear of the site.

The concept design process has identified an opportunity to progress a project that is well positioned to align with the October round of the Department of Health Cemetery Grants. This report seeks support to progress the supply and construction of three additional niche walls adjacent to the existing Grove niche walls. This project offers a relatively low-cost investment with strong revenue potential, while responding to community demand for additional memorial positions. Importantly, the revenue generated will contribute to funding more complex projects identified through the concept design process, while minimising the impact on the Cemetery Trust's existing funds.

The report also provides an update on the proposed removal and replacement of the existing pencil pines within the Foothills Precinct. Commencement of these works will support the Masterplan's broader objectives of enhancing the cemetery's landscape, increasing shade and creating opportunities for memorialisation through new tree planting.

The concept designs for other Focus Areas within the Foothills Precinct are being further developed, with work continuing to refine potential yields, costs and staging options to support practical implementation over time. The updated designs are expected to be presented to Council in the new year for further consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS
That Council:
1. Note the progress of the development of concept designs for the Foothills precinct as detailed in the Officers' report.
2. Approve the installation of three additional niche walls alongside the existing Grove niche walls, in Focus Area Six as detailed in Attachments 2 and 3 in line with Council's adopted Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan, and:
    a. Note that officers will prepare a funding application for the October round of the Department of Health Cemetery Grants for a grant towards supply and construction costs.

b. Authorise the Mayor, Councillor _____, and Councillor _____, in their capacity as Trust Members, to approve and sign the Department of Health grant application.
c. Authorise officers to procure the supply and construction of the three additional niche walls under delegation and note that any costs not covered by grant funding will be met from the Cemetery Trust's funds.

3. Authorise officers to progress replacement of the pencil pines in the Foothills Precinct with trees that provide both shade, and memorialisation opportunities in line with Council's adopted Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan.
4. Note that officers will provide further updates on the concept designs and community engagement planning in February/March 2027.

1. DISCUSSION

Ferntree Gully Cemetery (FTGC), established in 1873 and managed by Council as Trustee since 1982, is required to be maintained in perpetuity under Victorian law. Declared closed to new burials in 1984; it was later expanded in 2002, creating additional burial and ashes interment spaces. At that time, Council resolved not to pursue further expansion. Due to the site being landlocked, further growth opportunities are very limited. As capacity again declined, Council approved developments in 2018 that delivered 280 new ashes positions by 2020.

Since then, and to ensure a pipeline of future sales capacity, development of a Landscape Masterplan has been undertaken to identify new opportunities for further infill development of FTGC. The Masterplan, adopted by Council on 15 December 2025 outlined a staged program of works and upgrades designed to enhance visitor experience, create memorial opportunities, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the cemetery grounds. A copy of the Recommendations, extracted from the adopted Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan is included at Attachment 1.

Following Council adoption of the Masterplan, work has progressed to the next stage of implementation, with concept designs now being developed for the identified priority areas. This work will help translate the Masterplan's broader vision into practical proposals for staged delivery.

1.1 Project Development and Precinct Approach

The Foothills Precinct has been identified as the first stage of implementation of the Masterplan, providing the most straightforward opportunity to commence works. Council's Major Projects team are leading delivery through a staged, precinct-based approach, with revenue from each stage intended to contribute to subsequent works. Michael Smith and Associates Landscape Architecture and Urban Design have been appointed through Council's procurement process to develop the concept designs for the first stage.

Stage 1 concept design work is currently underway for the north-east portion of the site at the corner of Clematis Avenue and The Glade (the Foothills precinct). To date, this has included site investigations, development of emerging concept options, preliminary cost and yield estimates, and consideration of stakeholder and community requirements. Officers are continuing to work with the consultant to further develop and refine the concepts, with the emerging designs proposed to be presented for consideration in February/March 2027, prior to broader community engagement on the preferred options.

1.2 Concept Designs

An overview of the focus areas that are being considered for the Foothills precinct as part of the concept design process is included in Attachment 2.

Ongoing development of the concept designs has been informed by several site visits, ongoing engagement with Council officers and careful consideration of community feedback received through the previous stages of engagement undertaken as part of the Landscape Masterplan. Officers are continuing to consider the potential yield, costs, sequencing and staging of the proposed works, including how different areas may be progressed over time within the limited resources available.

Full concept designs, together with proposed sequencing and staging of the works, indicative yield and revenue, and associated construction costs, will be presented in February/March 2027 to consider the approach to the future development of the Cemetery within the resources available.

1.3 Progression of Focus Area Six

Having reviewed initial yield, design and costing information through the concept design process, the emerging officer recommendation is to prioritise implementation of Focus Area Six at the current time.

The recommended approach to developing Focus Area Six is a relatively straightforward, and preliminary modelling indicates a comparatively high return relative to the anticipated construction cost. The proposed works replicate the existing memorial walls in this location and therefore do not require the additional detailed or complex design work associated with some of the other potential development areas. An initial concept design is provided at Attachment 3.

Progressing Focus Area Six is considered the option that can most quickly make additional interment positions available to meet community demand. This also responds to the Cemetery's immediate financial needs to generate operational revenue from the sale of these positions. Importantly, progressing Focus Area Six would also enable Council to pursue available grant funding through the Department of Health for construction works.

At the same time, officers will continue to refine recommendations arising from the concept planning for other areas within the precinct, including the associated community engagement and consideration of the appropriate sequencing of future works. The outcomes of this work will be brought back for consideration in February/March to inform the next stages of Masterplan implementation later in 2027.

In short, Focus Area Six is a relatively straightforward element of the Masterplan that can be progressed independently of the more complex design and development opportunities within the broader precinct. Commencing this work now would therefore facilitate an application under the current grant round, enable timely progress towards meeting community demand, and support the Cemetery's financial sustainability.



Existing memorial walls



Focus Area 6 Location

1.4 Tree Replacement and Shade

The Cemetery Masterplan identifies the removal of the existing pencil pines and their replacement with a range of alternative tree species that will provide increased shade and contribute to the Cemetery's longer-term amenity. Importantly, the proposed trees will also create opportunities for future memorialisation around their bases, providing an additional option for families while enhancing the overall character of the Cemetery.

Initial concept designs have identified various tree species to replace the pencil pines. The emerging officer recommendation is that planning for this tree replacement work commence now in the Foothills precinct with planting expected to take place around April/May 2027 depending on weather, with the exception of the area around the fountain. Deferring planting in the fountain location will avoid the risk of newly established trees being impacted by any future redevelopment of the fountain area.

Consideration will also be given to appropriate signage to inform cemetery users of the upcoming works, including the purpose and timing of the tree removal and replacement, to support clear communication and minimise any potential concern or confusion.

The tree replacement works were canvassed in the draft masterplan which was the subject of community engagement in late 2025 and respond directly to one of the most consistent themes raised through the Masterplan engagement, being the lack of shade throughout the Cemetery. Progressing the tree replacement program now would therefore address an identified community concern while contributing to the longer-term landscape and creating memorialisation opportunities contemplated by the Masterplan.

In short, the proposed tree replacement is another relatively straightforward element of the Masterplan that can be progressed independently of the more complex design and development opportunities within the broader Foothills Precinct. Commencing this work now would therefore enable timely progress towards an identified community need and a Masterplan outcome.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Two rounds of community engagement have previously been undertaken. Findings from this engagement activity have previously been reported to Council through the master planning process. A further round of community engagement is proposed in early 2027.

No further engagement specifically on the Focus Area Six niche walls or tree replacement works is proposed. The works largely replicate the form and function of existing memorial walls and

implement tree replacement, both of which are consistent with the adopted Masterplan and matters already considered through previous community engagement.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Progressing the concept design process will assist Council to understand and manage community expectations around long-term site management at Ferntree Gully Cemetery and contribute to the continued provision of access for the community to respectful and appropriate interment options.

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

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct environmental implications. As referenced, the replacement of the Pencil Pines with alternate species supports community feedback to increase opportunities for shade.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Masterplan is intended to be delivered through a pipeline of discrete, staged projects, rather than as a single upfront investment. Each stage will create new memorialisation opportunities, generate revenue through sales and contribute to funding subsequent stages. The works are funded by the Cemetery Trust rather than Council's capital works budget.

This staged approach supports the Cemetery's financial sustainability by maintaining a pipeline of positions available for sale and enabling revenue to be reinvested into future projects and perpetual maintenance obligations. Officers are continuing to assess the sequencing, yields, costs and potential returns of individual projects to inform implementation and maximise the long-term value of the Trust's investment.

Maintaining this pipeline is important to ensure the Cemetery has sufficient opportunities to generate revenue to meet its ongoing costs and long-term maintenance obligations.

Quotations are currently being sought for the supply and construction costs of three additional niche walls alongside the existing Grove niche walls, however, are anticipated to be below $150,000 (ex GST). Tree removal and establishment costs are estimated to be largely accommodated within the existing management services contract with Council with procurement costs for new trees anticipated to be below $6,000 (ex GST).

7. RISKS

There is a risk that the Cemetery's ability to remain financially sustainable over the long term may be impacted if sufficient revenue is not generated to fund ongoing operations, future development and its perpetual maintenance obligations. Maintaining a pipeline of new memorialisation opportunities and progressing the Masterplan is an important part of supporting the Cemetery's future revenue capacity. Officers will continue to monitor the Cemetery's financial position, available capacity and future funding requirements as the Masterplan progresses.

With project delivery led by Council's Major Projects team, construction and project management risks will be managed through Council's established project management and risk management processes.

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

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

ATTACHMENTS

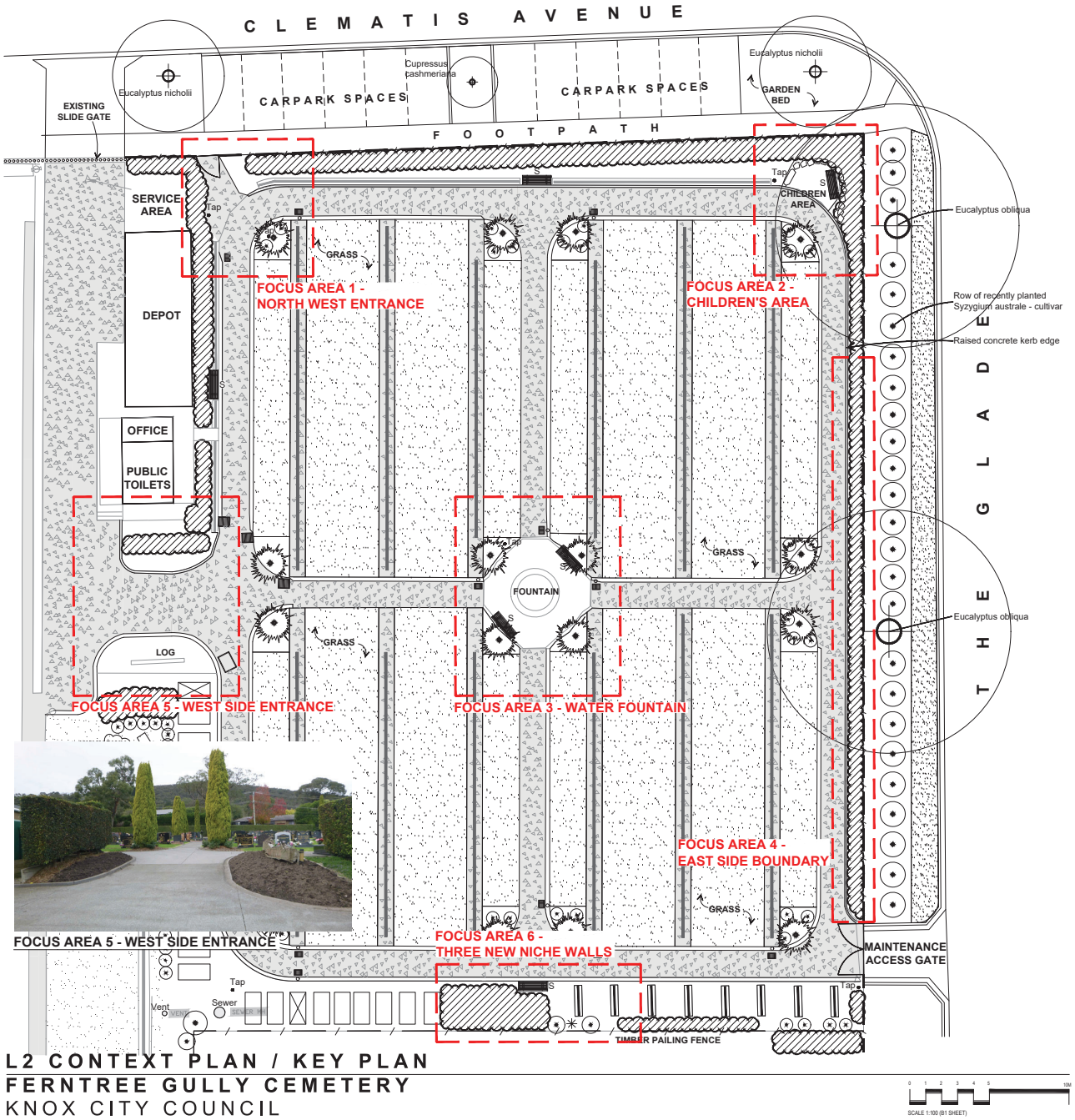
1. Attachment 1 - Ferntree Gully Masterplan Recommendations [**8.8.1** - 1 page]
2. Attachment 2 - Concept Design Overview [**8.8.2** - 1 page]
3. Attachment 3 - Focus Area 6 Niche Walls [**8.8.3** - 1 page]

Masterplan Recommendations (Extract from adopted Ferntree Gully Masterplan, 15 December 2025)



It is evident that the local community value the Cemetery as a resting place for loved ones, and as a beautiful space in the centre of the Ferntree Gully village. Improvements and new works are intended to complement and enhance the existing features and character of the Cemetery. The Master Plan considers a variety of memorial types with short, medium and long term opportunities for development.
Identified opportunities include:

1. Entrance reconfigured to activate the Cemetery.
2. Redesign as a Children's Area.
3. Hedge could be replaced with a niche wall.
4. Redesign the fountain and surrounds for memorialisation opportunities including new seating. Brick paving is uneven and should be replaced.
5. Additional niche walls.
6. Consider replacement species for memorial trees.
7. Area redesigned for garden bed memorials.
8. Wayfinding signage location. Replace existing rotten 'Foothills' sign.
9. Identified location for memorial for unmarked graves.
10. Existing depot building and toilet retained.
11. Opportunity for new seating and pathway memorialisation in this gap between graves.
12. Garden bed memorials.
13. Vacant space with existing seat for memorial opportunity.
14. Cemetery could relocate fence to the title boundary and reclaim land for memorials.
15. Path edge developed with memorials.
16. Existing Rose Garden extended with pathway to allow for double row.
17. Opportunity for new niche memorial wall with new paving and garden beds.
18. Possible location for memorial artwork sculpture.
19. Opportunity for existing path width to be reduced to 2.4m, allowing garden bed to be extended for memorialisation.
20. New avenue trees along entry pathway.



FOCUS AREA 5 - WEST SIDE ENTRANCE

L2 CONTEXT PLAN / KEY PLAN
FERNTREE GULLY CEMETERY
KNOX CITY COUNCIL

SCALE 1:100 (B1 SHEET)



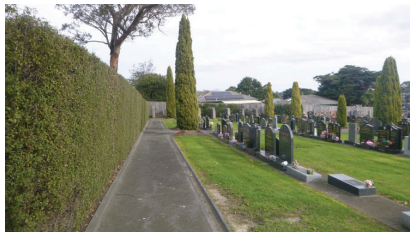
FOCUS AREA 1 - NORTH WEST ENTRANACE



FOCUS AREA 2 - CHILDREN'S AREA



FOCUS AREA 3 - WATER FOUNTAIN



FOCUS AREA 4 - EAST SIDE BOUNDARY

EXISTING PHOTOS OF KEY SITES

In conjunction with the follow sub-consultant:
Land use Planning,
Ground Science,
D'tech,
Equal Access,
Harlock Consulting,
Strucsure

Amendments:
RevA _Labeled Focus Area 6 _ 08.09.2026

Print Issue:
Emailed to James Augoustakis and Melissa Sparrow 10.08.2026
Emailed to James Augoustakis and Melissa Sparrow 18.08.2026
Emailed to James Augoustakis and Melissa Sparrow 25.08.2026
Emailed to James Augoustakis and Melissa Sparrow 01.09.2026
Emailed to Melissa Sparrow 08.09.2026

Title: L1 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS PLAN - STAGE 1, FERNTREE GULLY CEMETERY

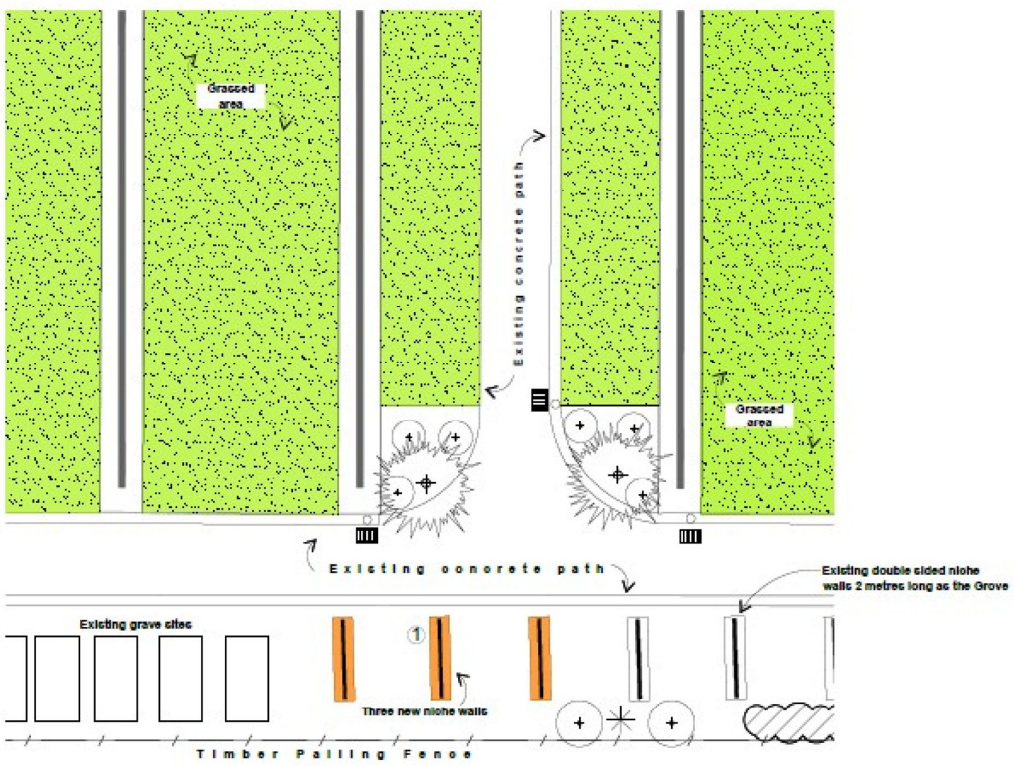
Client: Knox City Council

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Drawn: NC
Date: 08.09.2026
Project No.: 26-029
Cad File: MSA26029
Drawing No.: Sheet 2 of 14



THREE NEW NICHE WALLS

Proposed elements

1. Three niche walls each 2 metres long and double sided for 84 positions

L13 FOCUS AREA 6 - THREE NEW NICHE WALLS
FERNTREE GULLY CEMETERY,
KNOX CITY COUNCIL

9 Supplementary Items

10 Notices Of Motion

11 Urgent Business

12 Questions Through the Chair

13 Confidential Items