

# Our Achievements

## 2022/23 Financial Year





*Epacris impressa* (Common Heath)

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# Our highlights

## Message from the Councillors

We are pleased to present the Maroondah City Council *Our Achievements 2022/23* to the Maroondah community.

As we reflect on the past year, it continues to be important to recognise the work that has been done to create a positive future for Maroondah. To ensure we are well placed to meet the needs and aspirations of our community, we have successfully completed the second year of the four-year Council Plan, and updated the Year 3 Council Plan in June 2023.

The *Council Plan 2021-2025* has been updated to reflect the Year 3 initiatives, based on the community directions in *Maroondah 2040 – Our future together* and a range of community consultation activities undertaken throughout 2022/23.

And as we look to the future, it is time to review and develop a new community vision. We have commenced the planning, and over the next 18 months Council will be working with the community, key stakeholders and partners to ensure that the new Maroondah 2050 vision captures the hopes and aspirations of the Maroondah community as we look ahead to the year 2050.

Other strategic and long-term planning has also taken place resulting in the completion of the *Maroondah Sustainability Strategy 2022-2031*; *Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Action Plan*; *Disability Action Plan 2022-2026*; and *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*. Council has also continued to work with our community to implement the actions and outcomes from the Maroondah COVID-19 Recovery Plan, which was recognised within the sector winning the 2022 LGPro Corporate and Community Planning Award.

We have continued to plan for the future of our two key Activity Centres. The Ringwood MAC Masterplan 2018 was completed in December 2021 when the Victorian Government gazetted Amendment C130 to the Maroondah Planning Scheme. Development in Ringwood is continuing to take shape in response to the land use guidance in the Masterplan, with \$300 million of investment over the past 12 months. This includes the new Department of Transport building opened late in 2022 and significant new developments along Maroondah Highway.



(L-R) BACK: Cr Kylie Spears; Cr Paul Macdonald; Cr Marijke Graham; Cr Tony Dib OAM JP and Cr Linda Hancock.  
(L-R) FRONT: Cr Tasa Damante; Cr Rob Steane; Cr Mike Symon; and Cr Suzy Stojanovic.

Council has continued to work with key stakeholders, user groups and the community on the development of the Croydon Structure Plan and the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan. The Structure Plan is nearing completion and will respond to the expected population growth with Croydon Main Street continuing to serve as an important local destination. As planning progresses for the Community Wellbeing Precinct, we celebrated the completion of Hub B, which is now home to a range of community groups including Croydon Central Kindergarten, Maroondah Occasional Care, Croydon U3A, Croydon Senior Citizens Centre, Maroondah Community Assist and Council's Maternal and Child Health Service. The design for Hub A continues to progress, with Federal funding of \$5 million contributing towards the arts and cultural space, we look forward to construction commencing in 2024.

Our advocacy work with the Victorian and Australian Governments continued to seek funding opportunities for a range of significant projects that will benefit the Maroondah community. Commitments during 2022/23 include Victorian Government funding of \$6.6 million for major traffic safety improvements at Canterbury Road, Waterloo Street and Great Ryrie Street in Heathmont and \$500,000 for sportsfield lighting improvements at East Ringwood Reserve. The Victorian Government also committed \$1 billion for a new Maroondah Hospital and Council is advocating to the government to ensure improved outcomes from the project delivery. We continue to work with the Level Crossing Removal Project to ensure excellent outcomes from the removal of crossings at Dublin Road, Bedford Road and Coolstore Road and from the construction of new stations at Croydon and East Ringwood.

Regional partnerships and initiatives continue to be a focus to ensure we get the best outcomes for the Maroondah community. This includes actively supporting the Eastern Regional Group of Councils (ERG), which works collaboratively to achieve integrated advocacy and planning as well as joint procurement for shared services, which is supported by a four-year plan. The ERG works closely with other regional groups including the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance and the Homelessness and Social Housing Group Charter.

While the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had a profound impact on our community and organisation, Council continued to provide most of its services during the various stages of government restrictions over the three-year period (2020, 2021 and 2022). However, the long-term closures, and short reactive shutdowns, combined with continued restrictions, well in to 2022 resulted in cumulative financial losses to Council of approximately \$30 million from the long-term closure of our leisure facilities, and a redirection of resources and/or funding to respond to impacts of the pandemic over this period.

While noting the above, Council's 2022/23 Budget and Long Term Financial Strategy (LTFS) continued to be based on sound financial management, as well as an understanding of the rising cost of living facing ratepayers along with consideration of the significant financial impacts of the pandemic. The LTFS outlines Council's projected financial position for the next 10 years and provides a guide to the community, Council, and management in their analysis of options and decision-making about the future directions and operations of Council.

The LTFS demonstrates our long-term financial sustainability and ensures we can continue to invest in community facilities and services while operating within the rate cap environment as set out in The Local Government (Fair Go Rates) Act 2015. Maroondah City Council complied with the Victorian Government's 2022/23 rate cap of 1.75 percent over the average property rate of Council.

As we put the impacts of the pandemic behind us, we are very proud of the work that has been achieved by the organisation, in partnership with the Councillors and the community. Council has continued its best practice service delivery while ensuring prudent financial management and investment in Council's employees to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and tools to meet the needs of the Maroondah community. The significant achievements of the past year should be celebrated and are detailed throughout this report.

We commend it as a record of the extent of what has been accomplished to ensure our City, and the Maroondah community, continues to be active, prosperous, vibrant, sustainable, accessible, thriving, inclusive and empowered.

# Our city

The City of Maroondah covers a land area of 61.4 square kilometres in Melbourne’s outer east, 22 kilometres from the Central Business District. The area is a substantially developed peri-urban residential municipality, with an estimated population of 115,645 residents and 44,167 households with an average of 2.62 people per household.

It includes the suburbs of Bayswater North, Croydon, Croydon Hills, Croydon North, Croydon South, Heathmont, Kilsyth South, Ringwood, Ringwood East, Ringwood North and Warranwood. The City also includes small sections of Kilsyth, Park Orchards, Vermont and Wonga Park.

With little remaining land available for greenfield residential development, future population growth will be mainly stimulated by housing consolidation and medium density development.









Maroondah has the strategic advantage of being located at the north-eastern junction of the Eastern Freeway – EastLink corridor. There are two train lines and a large number of bus routes linking the City with other regions. Our sustainable transport links continue to expand, with on-road cycling paths and 39 kilometres of shared trails, including the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, the EastLink Trail, the Tarralla Creek Trail and the Dandenong Creek Trail.



Location of the City of Maroondah

## Acknowledgment of Country

We, in the spirit of Reconciliation, acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah, where Indigenous Australians have performed age old ceremonies. We acknowledge and respect their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

-  Council service centre
-  Train lines
-  Train stations
-  Creeks
-  Community houses
-  Parks
-  Leisure facilities
-  Arts and cultural centres



# Our history

Before European colonisation, the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People of the Kulin Nation were the traditional custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah for more than 35,000 years. The Wurundjeri People have a deep spiritual connection to the land and a unique ability to care for Country.

The Kulin Nation refers to an alliance of five tribes (language groups) who are the Traditional Owners and lived across a geographic area that encompasses Melbourne and its outer regions. Their collective territory extends around Port Phillip and Western Port, up into the Great Dividing Range and the Loddon and Goulburn River valleys. The five Kulin Nation language groups are:

- Boonwurrung (Boon-wur-rung)
- Dja Dja Wurrung (Jar-Jar-Wur-rung)
- Taungurung (Tung-ger-rung)
- Wathaurung (Wath-er-rung)
- Woiwurrung (Woy-wur-rung), commonly known as Wurundjeri.

The language groups were connected through shared moieties (divided groups) – the Bunjil (wedge-tailed eagle) and Waa (crow). Bunjil is the creation spirit of the Kulin and Waa the protector of the waterways.

The Wurundjeri People take their name from the Woiwurrung language word ‘wurun’ meaning the Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) which is common along ‘Birrarrung’ (Yarra River), and ‘djeri’, the grub which is found in or near the tree. The traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People are defined by natural and environmental features, significantly by water. The direction of water flow provides a clear indication of the shape of Country and reflects the cultural understanding of the Wurundjeri People as the “people of the Birrarung” (Yarra River). The Birrarung and the waters flowing into it are considered to be the traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People.

European settlers arrived in the 1830s and commenced using the land for grazing cattle. The original Ringwood village emerged in the mid to late 19th century, following the initial sale of land and the local proliferation of grazing, fruit growing, antimony mining and brick making activities.

The first constructed road through the area led to Mount Dandenong and was known as Sawmill Road, then Oxford Road, then finally given its current name of Mount Dandenong Road. The area became better known as it was used by bullock teams heading for the gold fields in Woods Point and the Great Dividing Range.

The railway line from Melbourne commenced its eastward development in 1861 extending to Lilydale through Ringwood and Croydon in December 1882. This resulted in a consolidation of township facilities, including the provision of local churches, banks and schools to accommodate a growing population. The line to Ferntree Gully followed soon afterwards.

The proclamation in 1924 of the Borough of Ringwood coincided with the electrification of the railway line, encouraging township development and subdivision. Electric trains were in service between Ringwood and Croydon in 1924 and were extended to Lilydale in 1925.

During its early days, Croydon was part of the Shire of Lillydale’s South-West Riding. Unlike some neighbouring towns, it had not been planned and proclaimed a town by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey but resulted from the private subdivision of crown land in the Parishes of Warrandyte, Mooroolbark and Ringwood. Severance of Croydon from Lillydale Shire was requested in 1957 since it was the most densely populated part of the Shire. The Shire of Croydon was declared in 1961.

Considerable suburban expansion during the post-war period gave rise to the declaration of the City of Ringwood in 1960 and formal recognition as part of the broader metropolitan region. Eastland was established in 1967 as a major ‘new format’ retail centre. In 1971, the City of Croydon was declared, reflecting increased residential development and population growth in this area.

Maroondah City Council was formed on 15 December 1994 by the amalgamation of the former Cities of Croydon and Ringwood, and parts of the former Shire of Lillydale and the former City of Doncaster and Templestowe. The term ‘Maroondah’ is named after an aboriginal word meaning ‘leaf’ which symbolises the green environment of the city.





*Reconciliation week at Ringwood Town Square*

# Our Vision

Maroondah will be a vibrant and diverse city with a healthy and active community, living in green and leafy neighbourhoods which are connected to thriving and accessible activity centres contributing to a prosperous economy within a safe, inclusive and sustainable environment.



## Our future community outcomes

Council has worked with the community to refresh the vision for the future of the municipality. *Maroondah 2040 – Our future together* identifies a range of preferred outcomes for the community looking ahead to the year 2040. The community’s future vision is:



### A safe, healthy and active community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a safe, healthy and active community where all people have the opportunity to experience enhanced levels of social, emotional and physical wellbeing.



### An accessible and connected community

In 2040, Maroondah will be accessible for all ages and abilities with walkable neighbourhoods, sustainable transport options, and a safe integrated transport network.



### A prosperous and learning community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a thriving regional centre of economic activity and education, where the sustainable growth of local businesses is supported, and diverse lifelong learning opportunities are accessible for all community members.



### An attractive, thriving and well built community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an attractive, sustainable and well built community with thriving activity centres and a network of neighbourhoods where everyone has the opportunity to live, work and play locally.



### A vibrant and culturally rich community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a vibrant and creative community recognised for celebration of the arts, cultural expression and diverse entertainment options.



### An inclusive and diverse community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an inclusive and equitable community where all people are valued, supported and socially connected, and diversity is embraced and celebrated.



### A clean, green and sustainable community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a resilient community committed to sustainable living, enhancing our natural environment, and providing leadership in responding to climate change.



### A well governed and empowered community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an empowered community actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.



## A safe, healthy and active community

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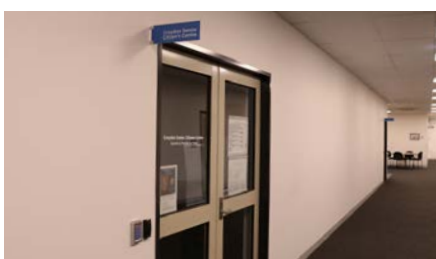
### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We implemented the Maroondah Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031



Council continued the implementation of the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031*, which provides a long-term strategy covering key priorities to improve the health, wellbeing, and resilience of Maroondah residents over the next 10 years. Actions were undertaken across the priority areas of healthy lifestyles; liveable neighbourhoods; safe communities; social inclusion; embracing diversity; and social harms. Highlights include the continued delivery of mental health and wellbeing initiatives; development of the *Maroondah Play Strategy*; implementation of the *Gender Equality Action Plan*; activities to celebrate and recognise Indigenous culture; along with development of Council's *Disability Action Plan 2022-2026*.

#### We progressed development of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct



The staged transformation of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct progressed with a new community services hub commencing operations in early 2023. A range of Council services, community services and community groups have now relocated to this facility. The Precinct has a focus on delivering enhanced wellbeing facilities, family and children's facilities, arts and cultural spaces, sport and recreation facilities, and open space. Planning continues for further hubs in the precinct in consultation with user groups and the local community.

## We continued to redevelop sporting infrastructure across Maroondah



Council was successful in advocating for Australian and Victorian Government funding for the redevelopment of multipurpose pavilions located in sporting reserves across Maroondah. The \$9 million redevelopment of Dorset Recreation Reserve involved establishment of a new multipurpose community and sports centre that also provides a hub for Maroondah's Burmese/Myanmar community. A \$1.8 million re-development of Cheong Park pavilion was formally opened in April 2023, and includes female friendly change rooms, umpire change rooms, game day toilets, a social space, kitchen and accessibility improvements. A \$1.9 million redeveloped pavilion at Ainslie Park was also completed in late 2022 including female friendly player and umpire change rooms, a first-aid room, accessible shower and toilet amenities, social space and kiosk.

## We worked in partnership to promote mental health and wellbeing



Council was involved in many community events to promote mental health and wellbeing during the year, in response to the sustained impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In October 2022, a screening of 'How to Thrive' was provided by Council in partnership with Communities of Wellbeing, The Foothills Foundation and Eastland. In November 2022, Council hosted 'The Resilience Project' at Karralyka in partnership with EACH, Eastern Regional Libraries, NEAMI National and Communities of Wellbeing. A series of mental health and wellbeing workshops were also held during October 2022 on Mental Health First Aid, The Science of Stress; Gratitude; Responding to Emotions; Finding your Superpowers; and Talking about Mental Health. Council also partnered with Neami National to deliver a Remembrance Walk in Ringwood to recognise World Suicide Prevention Day.

## We supported activities aimed at reducing harm associated with family violence



During the 16 Days of Activism in November and December 2022, Council worked with a range of community agency partners to display seven billboards in prominent locations across the municipality with messages relating to the prevention of family violence and gender equality and reflecting intersectionality, diversity and inclusion. Council delivered the '16 Steps to Respect' Project as part of this campaign consisting of art workshops to produce mosaic tiles that were installed in the foyers of Croydon and Ringwood Police Stations in partnership with Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, Boordawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service, Victoria Police and Eastern Community Legal Centre. A free online Social media self-defence' workshop was held in mid-2022 to help women use social media platforms safely. In March 2023, two 'Social Media Self Defence' sessions were facilitated for women with disabilities.



## A prosperous and learning community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a thriving regional centre of economic activity and education, where the sustainable growth of local businesses is supported, and diverse lifelong learning opportunities are accessible for all community members.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We planned enhancements for local neighbourhoods



Council has continued to advance the planning of neighbourhood initiatives and was invited to participate in a Victorian Government project to better plan local neighbourhoods. A *Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy* was finalised arising from the strategic review of nine shopping centres across Maroondah considering amenities, access and local transport. The Strategy will enable significant future infrastructure investment to support local businesses in these centres.

#### We worked in partnership to strengthen the Bayswater Business Precinct



Council continued working in partnership to implement the *Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy* to maintain and strengthen the economic value of the Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) to the eastern region. Economic activities continue to focus on building awareness of the precinct and understanding and strengthening local business connections. Work has also progressed on a business case to establish a Hub in the Precinct that would provide a connecting space for business and support agencies/organisations.

## We progressed development of the Ringwood and Croydon activity centres



Council continued to focus on supporting economic recovery from impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and providing support to local businesses through targeted projects and place management initiatives. Regular stakeholder engagement continued to take place with Eastland and the Croydon Main Street Traders Association. Work also continued on the planned upgrade to the Maroondah Highway boulevard as well as the creation of a masterplan for the future development of Staley Gardens in central Ringwood.

## We worked in partnership to support the rollout of funded three- and four-year-old kindergarten in Maroondah.



Council continued to work with the Department of Education regarding the Victorian Government's Best Start Best Life kindergarten reforms. Children in Maroondah can now access between 5 and 15 hours of funded three-year-old kindergarten per week, with all kindergartens expected to transition to the full 15 hours by 2029. Four-year-old children will be able to access 30 hours of funded kindergarten (up from the current 15 hours) by 2032 and will commence transitioning to increased hours from 2030. Council is supporting kindergartens to understand, plan for and transform their services in line with the 'Best Start Best Life' reforms and has obtained Victorian Government funding to employ a Kindergarten Initiative Project Officer to work with kindergartens to understand the impact of the reforms on their future services.

## We progressed regional advocacy and partnerships



Maroondah is one of six members of the Eastern Regional Group of Councils (ERG) who have progressed joint advocacy for a range of initiatives and capital works projects to support our collective communities, grow our economy, and enhance the sustainability of our built and natural environments. Key advocacy issues highlighted during 2022/23, included: diverse local employment opportunities, addressing the decline in manufacturing jobs, being a region known for environmental stewardship, building resilient and cohesive communities, and promoting active and public transport. Maroondah City Council also partners with Knox and Yarra Ranges to deliver library services through a regional library corporation. During the past year, the governance model for this service has transitioned from the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation, to Your Library Limited (a company limited by guarantee) in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.



## A vibrant and culturally rich community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a vibrant and creative community recognised for celebration of the arts, cultural expression and diverse entertainment options.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We commenced redevelopment of Karralyka



Design has commenced on the staged redevelopment of Karralyka, a leading regional theatre and function centre in Ringwood East. The proposed redevelopment will include a new multi-purpose foyer expansion, outdoor paved terraced area leading from the enhanced foyer space and accessibility improvements. During 2022/23, Council undertook a renewal program of Karralyka including improvements to theatre seating, carpet and the loading dock.

#### We continued to support cultural tourism and local creative industries



Council continued to provide subsidised use of cultural facilities for local arts and cultural groups and creative practitioners for rehearsing and presentations, in addition to providing exhibition spaces at Karralyka, Maroondah Federation Estate, Wyreena Community Arts Centre, and community halls. Arts activation initiatives have been incorporated into in planning for local neighbourhoods and key activity centres promoting the sustainability of local creative industries and enhancing the cultural vibrancy and social value of these centres. Council's art galleries implemented a number of new exhibitions featuring local artists.



## We continued implementation of the *Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2020-2025*



Council has continued implementing the *Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2020-2025*. Key projects during the past year included delivery of public art commissions for the Croydon multi-level carpark and Melview Reserve in Ringwood North, along with a mural at the GloBird headquarters in Ringwood. The Victorian Government funded 'Reignite Croydon Laneway Lights' public art project also commenced to revitalise the night-time economy in Croydon Main Street. Council continues to plan for arts activations at local neighbourhood shopping centres and for the integration of arts and cultural facilities within the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct. Arts participation and exhibition projects have engaged with target groups including disability and intersectional communities. Special events during 2022/23 included Halloween House at Wyreena and ArtsBus creative workshops at the Maroondah Festival. The 2022/23 Arts and Cultural Grants Program provided over \$23,000 in funding community-initiated projects.

## We celebrated First Peoples Arts and Culture



During the year, Council continued to present and promote a wide range of First Peoples arts and cultural practice within Maroondah in collaboration with the local community, artists, community leaders and indigenous organisations. During NAIDOC Week in July 2022, *The Artistic Magnitude of Mullum Mullum* exhibition was held at Maroondah Federation Estate as well as performances in Ringwood Town Square in partnership with Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place (MMIGP) and Eastland. During Reconciliation Week in May 2023, the *From our Elders* video installation by Blak Crow filmmaker Daen Sansbury-Smith featured in ArtSpace at Realm, alongside a large-scale double portrait of local Elders by local artist Amanda Wright, and an ArtWall mural collaboration with local schools. The launch event at Ringwood Town Square involved performances by Kutcha Edwards, Yeng Gali Mullum choir, and the Eastwood Primary School choir, in collaboration with MMIGP and Maroondah Movement for Reconciliation.

## We continued to deliver a range of events and performances



In November 2022, approximately 25,000 people visited the Maroondah Festival with over 75 community groups showcasing their services. Over 5,000 people attended Council's annual Maroondah Carols event at Croydon Park in early December 2022. The theatre season at Karralyka was launched with performances including Cirque Mother Africa, the Melbourne Comedy Festival Roadshow, Victorian State Ballet and performances inspired by Queen, Joni Mitchell, John Denver and Christine McVie as well as the Morning Music and Karrakids series. Other events included: The Rhythms of Ireland, The Bill Joel Story, The Johnny Cash and June Carter Show and the Soweto Gospel Choir. The Maroondah FReeZA Program continued to deliver successful, high quality live music events with over 550 community members attending these events.



## A clean, green and sustainable community

In 2040, Maroondah will be a resilient community committed to sustainable living, enhancing our natural environment, and providing leadership in responding to climate change.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We worked in partnership to enhance and reimagine the Tarralla Creek



Council continued to work in partnership to transform a two-kilometre section of Tarralla Creek into community open space and waterway. The Maroondah project is one of five trial sites across Melbourne for Melbourne Water's *Re-imagining Your Creek* program which 'daylights' the creek by opening watercourses and restoring them to natural conditions, along with promoting community connection to the creek corridor. The *Reimagining Tarralla Creek* project is being delivered in with Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, and the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning (DELWP).

#### We adopted a new Maroondah Sustainability Strategy



Council adopted the *Maroondah Sustainability Strategy 2022-2031* in August 2022, to guide sustainability outcomes identified in *the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision*. The Strategy includes actions that will promote sustainability by addressing and responding to the themes of the built environment, climate change, community connections, a green economy, green infrastructure, governance, evaluation and improvement. An *Action Plan for the 2022-2024* period will support the implementation of the Strategy.

## We commenced development of a Climate Change Plan



Work has commenced on combining the current *Climate Change Risk and Adaptation Strategy* with the *Carbon Neutral Strategy* to produce a new Climate Change Plan, which will support key directions outlined in the *Sustainability Strategy 2022-2031*. The Plan will provide a holistic approach to managing climate change mitigation strategies, adaptation, and risk across Council and the community.

## We implemented the Waste, Litter and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2030



A range of initiatives have been undertaken over the past year as part of the *Waste, Litter and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2030*, including rolling out the new Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) service. The FOGO service commenced in May 2023 and included the standardisation of the garden bin lid from maroon to lime green, delivery of FOGO kits to households, along with a comprehensive education, communication, and engagement campaign. New contracts for receipt and sort, general waste processing, collections and hard waste have come into effect. These provide community members with an additional paid hard waste collection and enable bookings for collection of green waste.

## We reached a partnership agreement to convert landfill waste to green energy



In October 2022, Maroondah became the first Victorian Council to contract the supply of municipal solid waste to a new thermal Energy from Waste (EfW) facility to be built in Maryvale. EfW refers to treatment technologies which derive the energy value from waste and turn it into electricity, biogas, heating or fuel. Sending waste to the Maryvale EfW facility instead of landfill avoids methane emissions. An estimated 325,000 tonnes of non-recyclable residual waste from Councils and businesses will be used to produce energy for the Maryvale Mill. It is estimated that the facility will achieve a net reduction of 270,000 tonnes per annum in greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to removing 50,000 cars from the road annually.

## We prepared a Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Action Plan



In recent years, Council in partnership with the community has identified eight Biolink Habitat Corridors representing the best opportunities for improving habitat connectivity across Maroondah. The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink was selected as the first to have a detailed action planning process. During the year, a group of key stakeholders from Council and community have worked together to develop a vision for the corridor and have selected seven focal species to prioritise habitat requirements. A range of potential actions and locations were identified to create a functioning wildlife corridor within the municipality.



## An accessible and connected community

In 2040, Maroondah will be accessible for all ages and abilities with walkable neighbourhoods, sustainable transport options, and a safe integrated transport network.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We supported works of the removal of three railway crossings



Council continued to work in partnership with Level Crossing Removal Projects on level crossing removal projects at Bedford Road in Ringwood, Dublin Road in Ringwood East, and Coolstore Road in Croydon. Public consultation has enabled the Bedford Road level crossing removal project to include a shared walking and cycling path connecting the Heathmont Rail Trail to Bedford Park. Major construction works for the Dublin Road crossing in Ringwood East have commenced, with trains running in the new trenches. The proposed approach for the Coolstore Road Level Crossing in Croydon involves a new rail bridge, providing improved vehicle and pedestrian connections in Croydon Activity Centre which is currently divided by the railway line. Further community engagement and engineering assessments for this project will continue in 2023/24.

## We worked in partnership to implement road improvement works



During the year, a range of road enhancement works were undertaken across Maroondah. With Australian Government funding, Council worked closely with VicRoads to upgrade and signalise the intersection of Reilly Street and Wantirna Road in Ringwood with works completed in December 2022. The Australian Government also funded road rehabilitation works in New Street in Ringwood that were completed in July 2022 and infrastructure enhancement works on Eastfield Road in Ringwood East. Council is working closely with VicRoads on improvements to Plymouth Road between Narr-Maen Drive and Yarra Road in Croydon Hills, including new traffic lights and pedestrian crossing facilities at the Kirtain Drive intersection.

## We progressed development of a new activity centre carparks in Ringwood and Croydon



The construction of the Devon Street Carpark in Croydon was formally opened in December 2021, providing 402 car parking spaces. Planning is underway for a new carpark to be built in the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre, with construction scheduled to commence in 2023/24. The carpark is proposed to reduce parking congestion on nearby streets; improve connectivity to Ringwood train station, bus interchange and shared path network; retain heritage elements and enhance environmental amenity. Delivery of this project is supported through provision of funding from the Australian Government.

## We implemented the Healthy Streets project



Healthy Streets focuses on 10 liveability aspects relating to local streets to determine how safe, welcomed, and relaxed people feel when walking or riding their bike. The Bedford Road Shopping Centre and McAdam Square Shopping Centre Enhancement Plan Project introduced 15 local residents to the Healthy Streets Framework and trained them to apply an easy-to-understand assessment tool. These volunteers selected local streets to assess and provide feedback to Council. A series of pop-up engagement activations at McAdam Square during August 2022 also informed these enhancement plans. This project was recognised at the 2022 Planning Institute of Victoria Awards for Excellence for Exceptional Stakeholder Engagement.

## We made local traffic management improvements



Every year, Council undertakes road upgrade and rehabilitation works, accessibility enhancements and the installation of traffic calming measures at school crossings and intersections across Maroondah. During 2022/23, intersection safety improvements were made at the Stirling Road and Toorak Road intersection in Croydon including a mountable apron and splitter islands alterations to improve access for waste vehicles, and new pedestrian crossings to improve accessibility. Rehabilitation and upgrade works to Yarra Road, between Panorama Drive and Gatters Road in Croydon North and Wonga Park were completed in June 2023. Traffic assessments and preliminary design work has also been completed for future improvements to the Old Lilydale and Carcoola Road intersection in Ringwood East.

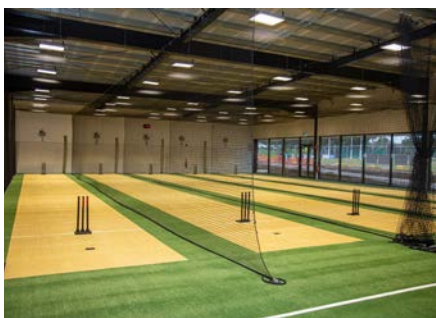


## An attractive, thriving and well built community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an attractive, sustainable and well built community with thriving activity centres and a network of neighbourhoods where everyone has the opportunity to live, work and play locally.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We opened Maroondah Edge



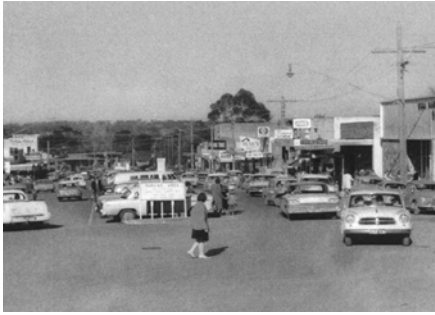
Council has completed and opened a new Indoor Cricket Training Centre in line with the Council endorsed Jubilee Reserve Enhancement Plan. Completed in June 2023 and named Maroondah Edge, the new \$4.1m centre includes a five-lane indoor cricket training centre, half netball court, multipurpose room, and office space. This project was delivered with \$2.9m in funding support from the Victorian Government.

#### We redeveloped a range of new playspaces



Council has completed play space renewal works at Packham Place Reserve in Wonga Park and Munro Street Reserve in Ringwood. Planning is also underway to redevelop playspaces at: Longview Reserve in Croydon South, Danielle Crescent Reserve in Heathmont, Laura Court in Bayswater North, Chandra Avenue Reserve in Kilsyth South and Cantala Crescent Reserve in Ringwood North.

## We adopted a new Heritage Action Plan.



Council has adopted a new *Maroondah Heritage Action Plan* to ensure local heritage has greater protections. Over the past six years, Council has considered several planning scheme amendments seeking to apply heritage controls to protect the heritage fabric of several individual sites at risk of demolition. The Action Plan supports Council's ability to analyse and improve the support for local heritage and its identification, protection, and promotion. A number of actions were completed during 2022/23 including completion of Maroondah Heritage Study Review, implementation of the municipal wide heritage study review through a Planning Scheme Amendment, and the production of two information videos on heritage matters available on Council's website.

## We worked in partnership to facilitate a sustainable approach to urban redevelopment



*Greening of the Greyfields* is an innovative approach to residential renewal, which involves landowners working together and redeveloping at the same time, to positively transform neighbourhoods to be more sustainable and have greater neighbourhood character. In early 2021, Council exhibited Planning Scheme Amendments to establish two Greening the Greyfields precincts in Ringwood and Croydon South. A Planning Panel in June 2021 considered submissions and supported the Amendments. The Minister for Planning formally approved the amendments in November 2022. Additional precincts across Maroondah may be identified where this model can enable urban redevelopment.

## We delivered the Tarralla Creek Stormwater Harvesting Scheme



In partnership with the former Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water, Council has delivered the Tarralla Creek Stormwater Harvesting Scheme. Completed in May 2023, the harvesting scheme provides irrigation for four sportsfields within the Croydon precinct, including the construction of a Gross Pollutant Trap, a 1000kL underground storage tank within the Town Park athletics field, a 500kL header tank at Croydon Park Oval, along with associated treatment, pumping and irrigation infrastructure.

## We undertook flood mitigation works



Council has continued to develop flood mitigation solutions for central Croydon along with New Street in Ringwood, Sherbrook Avenue catchment in Ringwood, and Scenic Avenue and Wingate Avenue catchments in Ringwood East. Drainage upgrade works in New Street (south of Maroondah Highway) were completed in August 2022. The fourth and final stage of the Scenic Avenue, Ringwood East catchment project was completed in April 2023. The third stage of the Sherbrook catchment drainage upgrade works commenced in June 2023 and are expected to be completed in December 2023.



## An inclusive and diverse community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an inclusive and equitable community where all people are valued, supported and socially connected, and diversity is embraced and celebrated.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We promoted intergenerational community connections



*GenConnect* is a social inclusion program that involves bringing older people together who may be experiencing loneliness, with the children at Maroondah's Occasional Care early education and childcare service. The aim of the program is to intergenerationally socialise and interact together, two hours a week over eight sessions. *GenConnect* aims to build and maintain meaningful relationships, to improve the wellbeing of all participants and develop a sense of belonging and value to the lives of older people. The program was held over June and July 2022 and won the Victorian Early Years Award for 'Creating Collaborative Community Partnerships'.

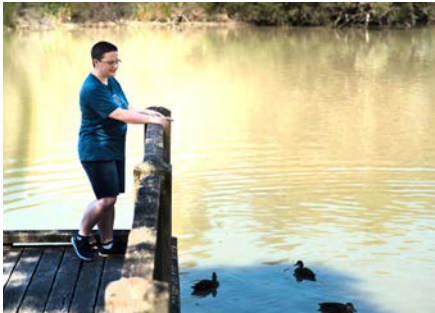
#### We continued to promote gender equality



Council has continued to implement positive workplace change and a range of new initiatives in line with its *Gender Equality Action Plan*. As part of this work, Council is embedding gender impact assessments into reviews of existing policies, programs, and services. Council has again actively participated in the People Matters survey which is independently run by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. The survey results will assist Council to monitor its progress while also informing future initiatives and helping to meet Council's statutory reporting obligations.



## We provided support for people with a disability, their carers and families



A new *Disability Action Plan 2022-2026* was adopted by Council in July 2022. The Plan outlines Council's commitment to reduce barriers for people with disability and support a more accessible and socially inclusive community. Some key highlights during the year included: continued implementation of the 'Porn is not the Norm' project providing education on the implications of pornography on people with autism; a Victorian Government grant to build a Changing Places facility at Jubilee Park; an user audit on Council and Maroondah Leisure websites; and continued support provided to community members in navigating the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Council also presented a changemakers event to celebrate International Day of People with Disability involving three past members of the Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee whose leadership has inspired and influenced change.

## We supported our local cultural and linguistic diverse communities



Council's Maternal Child Health (MCH) service offers a variety of parent education programs for refugee families, with interpreters to support non-English speaking families. The six-week MCH facilitated parent groups recommenced during 2022/23 for Burmese first time parents, with these groups following on from the supported playgroup program. Council has also employed two roles to support culturally and linguistically diverse children and their families to attend kindergarten and transition to primary school. The workers support families to link with services to address engagement barriers and support inclusion and ongoing participation in education.

## We promoted inclusion for our LGBTI+ community members



Maroondah City Council prides itself on being an inclusive and supportive workplace, with a commitment to promoting gender equality and gender diversity. In May 2023, Council proudly celebrated International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia & Transphobia and the Maroondah LGBTI+ community with messages on social media, along with an event for employees. Council has supported several events to support the LGBTI+ community over the past year including: *YASSSFEST*, a youth-focussed event to celebrate *Wear it Purple* day; Poolside Pride hosted at Aquahub in Croydon during the Midsumma Festival; and support for local young people to attend the Victorian Pride March. During March 2022, Council commenced a monthly peer LGBTI+ social support group titled *Mature Rainbows* aimed at supporting community members 50 years or over who identify as LGBTI+.



## A well governed and empowered community

In 2040, Maroondah will be an empowered community actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

### Our highlights in 2022/23

#### We provided community grant funding to local groups and organisations



Council provided more than \$208,000 in funding to 73 Maroondah community organisations as part of the 2022/23 Community Grants Funding Program. There are three schemes covering community development, small equipment, and emergency relief. Recipients came from a broad range of community groups, to support emergency relief and mental health programs, as well as programs for youth, older people, and disability groups. Funded projects included a breakfast program for young people, the establishment of a community of practice to support Indigenous mental health, a cross-cultural Harmony Day event, translation of key messages during emergency events, and support for Maroondah Winter Shelter.

#### We implemented a suite of cybersecurity enhancements



Council has commenced a suite of enhancements designed to increase Council's cyber resilience. Council implemented a Security Incident Event Management tool with a 24/7 managed security service. Council has also implemented a Cybersecurity Incident framework along with a suite of Incident and Disaster Recovery procedures. Cybersecurity awareness training has continued for all Council employees.

## We engaged the community to inform a broad range of projects



Over the past year, Council has engaged with the Maroondah community on over 30 projects, ranging from enhancement plans, infrastructure projects, and strategy and policy development. Projects included the draft Community Local Law; draft *Stadium Sports Strategy*, draft enhancement plans for Woodland Park and Norwood Reserve; development of a *Play and Gathering Places Plan*; Flood mapping; *Children & Families Strategy Action Plan*; *Youth Strategy Action Plan*; Bedford Road bicycle plan design; draft Maroondah Tennis Strategy; and the vision for Staley Gardens in Ringwood.

## We enhanced our provision of customer service and communications to the community



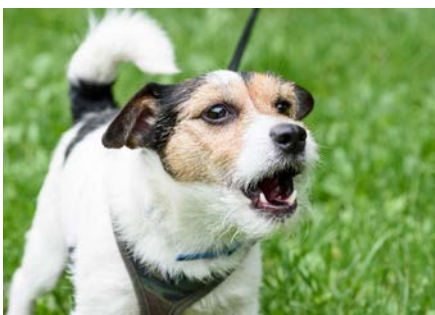
Council's *Customer Service Strategy 2021-2025* outlines the connection between changing customer expectations, advancements in technology, and the need to maintain strong customer engagement. Progressive customer contact centre technology continues to enable Council to deliver responsive digital contact channels including live chat and the short message service (SMS). The main Council website was redeveloped during 2022/23 to include an online mapping tool, improvements to the forms and permits sections, and the functionality of the Community Directory section. Council's 22 social media channels continue to connect well with the Maroondah community, with more than 57,000 followers.

## We implemented new Child Safe Standards



In response to updated Victorian Child Safe Standards which came into effect on 1 July 2022, Council has developed a new Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and is working to ensure that the standards are embedded across the organisation. We are committed to creating and maintaining a child-safe and child-friendly organisation where all children and young people are valued and protected from harm and abuse. Council has rolled out child safety training to all Council employees and volunteers, implemented new criteria for employee Working with Children Checks, and worked in partnership to deliver online sessions for local community organisations to support understanding of the Standards and their obligations.

## We promoted responsible pet ownership



Council's *Domestic Animal Management Plan* provides a proactive approach to animal management and responsible dog and cat management. The Plan covers topics such as pet registration, restricted breeds and ownership limits. During 2022/23, Council updated the resources available to residents regarding barking dogs with an information booklet, tips for reducing barking and a letter for the barking dog owners. A campaign to encourage dog owners to be responsible in picking up dog waste involved a video on social media, signage in Council reserves, distributed postcard, and footpath decals.

**To contact Council**






- phone 1300 88 22 33 or (03) 9298 4598
- SMS 0480 020 200
- visit our website at [www.maroondah.vic.gov.au](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au)
- email [maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au](mailto:maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au)

**Translating and Interpreter Service**

13 14 50

**National Relay Service (NRS)**

13 36 77

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