

# Our Achievements

## 2021/22 Financial Year







*Dancing with Creation opening - Ringwood East*

## Contents

<b>Our highlights</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our city</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Our history</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Our Vision</b>	<b>10</b>
Our future community outcomes	11
<b>A safe, healthy and active community</b>	<b>12</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	12
<b>A prosperous, and learning community</b>	<b>14</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	14
<b>A vibrant, and culturally rich community</b>	<b>16</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	16
<b>A clean, green and sustainable community</b>	<b>18</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	18
<b>An accessible and connected community</b>	<b>20</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	20
<b>An attractive, thriving and well built community</b>	<b>22</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	22
<b>An inclusive and diverse community</b>	<b>24</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	24
<b>A well governed and empowered community</b>	<b>26</b>
Our highlights in 2021/22	26





National Tree Day planting

# Our highlights

## Message from the Councillors

We are pleased to present a summary of our achievements for the 2021/22 financial year 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 first year of the new four-year Council Plan, and reviewed and updated the delivery of the Year 2 Council Plan in June 2022. The *Council Plan 2021-2025* has been updated to reflect the Year 2 initiatives, based on the community directions in *Maroondah 2040 - Our future together* and a range of community consultation activities undertaken throughout 2021/22.

Other strategic and long-term planning has taken place resulting in the completion of a new *Maroondah Heritage Action Plan; Maroondah Positive Ageing Framework and Action Plan 2021-25; Gender Equality Action Plan; and a Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-25*. In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, 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 with the 2022 LGPro Corporate and Community Planning Award.

We continued to plan for the future of our two Activity Centres. The Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre Masterplan 2018 was adopted by Council in November 2018. The final stage of the Masterplan was completed in December 2021 when the Victorian Government gazetted Amendment C130 to the Maroondah Planning Scheme. This will guide the land use, development and investment in central Ringwood over the next 15 years.

Council has continued to work with key stakeholders, user groups, and the community on the development of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan and the development of concept plans for the various community and recreational hubs. This has seen construction commence on the former Croydon Civic building, now known as Hub B, which will be home to a range of community groups including Croydon Central Kindergarten, Maroondah Occasional Care, Croydon U3A, and Council's Maternal and Child Health service. This long-term project will bring together a range of community services, programs and activities for people of all ages and abilities.

Council also continued its advocacy to the Victorian Government and the Australian Government, resulting in over \$11 million for a range of significant projects that will benefit the Maroondah community.



(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.

In addition we continue to actively support and participate in regional partnerships and initiatives to achieve integrated advocacy and planning.

We have successfully completed our Year One Council Plan activities under the continuing impacts of the COVID pandemic. Despite this, Council has continued to provide the majority of its services during the various government restrictions over the past 12 months.

However, the long term closures during 2020 and 2021, and short, reactive shutdowns during the first half of 2021 and the covid restrictions during the first half of 2022 has resulted in a cumulative loss of approximately \$30 million across the past three financial years. These closures particularly impacted our leisure facilities including Karralyka, Aquanation, Aquahub and golf courses.

While noting the above, Council's 2021/22 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 COVID-19 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.

While we continue to manage the impacts of COVID-19, we are very proud of the work that has been achieved by the organisation, in partnership with the Councillors and the 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 116,080 residents and 46,870 households with an average of 2.48 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.

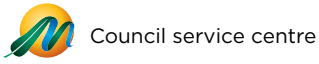
Maroondah has the strategic advantage of being located at the north-eastern junction of the Eastern Freeway - EastLink corridor. There are two train lines and a large number of bus routes linking the City with other regions. Our sustainable transport links continue to expand, with on-road cycling paths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



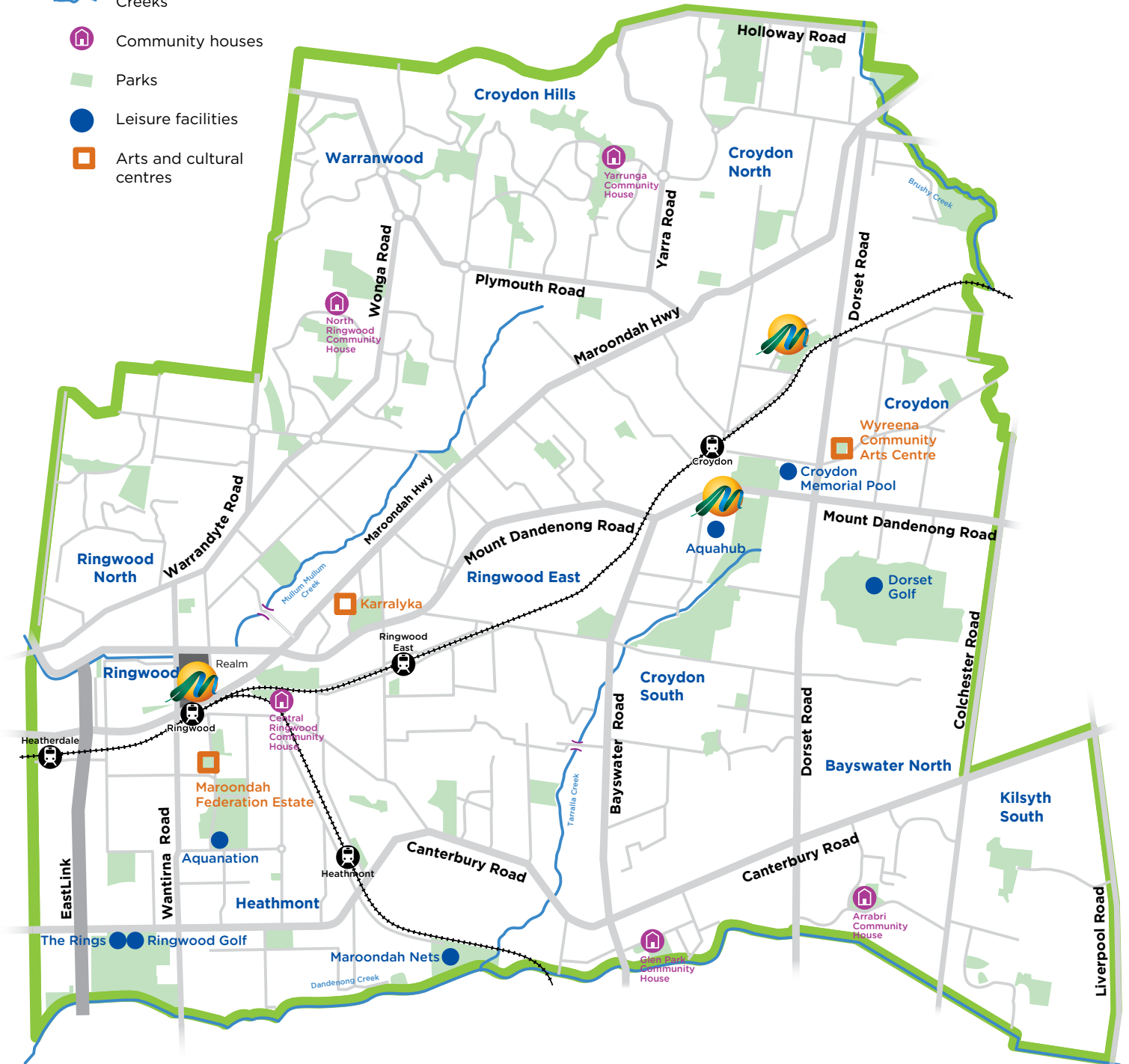
Parks



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 Birrarrung” (Yarra River). The Birrarrung 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.





*Ringwood Lake*

# 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

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.

### Our highlights in 2021/22

#### We implemented the Maroondah COVID-19 Recovery Plan



Council has continued to work in partnership to support community needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A range of strategic outcomes identified within the *Maroondah COVID-19 Recovery Plan* have been implemented in 2021/22 in partnership with other levels of government, local organisations, and agencies. Seven recovery areas were highlighted in the Plan including: caring for our people, connecting our community, sustaining our community facilities, supporting community leadership and advocacy, rebuilding livelihoods and advocacy, revitalizing cultural participation and creative industries, and enhancing our connection with nature. To update our understanding of the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the Maroondah community, Council engaged with the community as part of a comprehensive *Maroondah COVID-19 Secondary Impact Assessment* which was completed in November 2021.



## We finalised a new Maroondah Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031



Council completed development of a new *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, including recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Strategy was adopted in October 2021 and meets the municipal health and wellbeing planning requirements of Public Health Act 2008. A supporting Health and Wellbeing Action Plan for the 2021-2023 period was finalised and endorsed in December 2021, highlighting key short-term activities over a two-year period. Implementation of a range of Year 1 actions associated with the Strategy and Action Plan have been completed.

## We continued to redevelop sporting infrastructure across Maroondah



Council was successful in advocating for Federal and Victorian Government funding for the redevelopment of multipurpose pavilions located in sporting reserves across Maroondah. Some of these improvements included female-friendly change rooms, large multipurpose rooms, amenities, upgraded lighting, carparking and landscaping. Redevelopments have been completed at Silcock Reserve (\$5.5 million) and Springfield Park (\$3.5 million) in Croydon, along with Jubilee Park (\$3.5 million) and Proclamation Park (\$3.25 million), in Ringwood. Redevelopments are underway at Cheong Pavilion (\$1.9 million) in Croydon South, along with Ainslie Park Pavilion (\$1.9 million) and Dorset Recreation Reserve (\$4 million) in Croydon.

## We designed and constructed a new dog park in Ringwood North



Council was successful in advocating for Victorian Government funding through the Local Parks Program for a purpose-built dog park at Parkwood Reserve in Ringwood North. The new dog park is fully enclosed and features double entry gates and a range of elements to keep dogs of all sizes entertained, including agility equipment and a time-out zone for younger and quieter dogs. This is the second purpose-built dog park in Maroondah, following the opening of the municipality's first dog park at Eastfield Park in Croydon in May 2017.

## We supported community mental health during COVID-19



To promote health and wellbeing within the community during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Council held several free events to promote mental health and resilience. Two keynote presentations were held: 'Good Food, Good Mood' presented by Joel Feren focused on the connection between good nutrition and mental wellbeing, and 'Mind Strength' presented by Dr Jodie Lowinger empowered participants to reduce anxiety and worry and build resilience. Council launched the 'Maroondah Lift' Project in June 2022, in partnership with EACH, as a seven-week wellbeing program to lift the spirits of residents. The free program included weekly interactive videos on a series of topics to learn simple and easy strategies to help improve overall wellbeing. A series of mental health and wellbeing workshops were also held on several topics including understanding mental health, mindfulness, addressing anxiety, the science of stress, talking about suicide, financial competency, and understanding controlling behaviour.



## 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 2021/22

#### We supported businesses during COVID-19



BizHub provided ongoing assistance to businesses in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This included a business concierge service directly addressing business needs, providing connection to experts and mentors, grant opportunities and wellbeing supports, and assisting with permits and approvals through the Better Approval Process. BizHub also provided specific sector support with COVIDSafe information including risk assessments and translated COVIDSafe information. The Bizhub Coworking Space continued to deliver both premium (ongoing) membership and casual access to desk and facility space for Maroondah businesses. Located at Realm, the coworking space is a dynamic, professional office space suited to small teams and solo operators, conveniently located and directly supported by the BizHub team. Following easing of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, the space has attracted local businesses that previously had standalone head offices, with small teams utilising the space for collaborative work.



## We worked in partnership to implement the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy



Council continued worked 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. The Strategy was developed in partnership with Knox and Yarra Ranges Councils and funded by the Victorian Government. Activity in the BBP contributes a significant amount to the eastern region's local economy, both in terms of job numbers and gross domestic product (GDP). During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, online sessions were conducted by the Department of Health (DoH) to provide information on the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions and COVIDSafe plans on manufacturing operations.

## We continued a strategic review of shopping centres in Maroondah



An assessment of nine key local shopping centres was undertaken to consider amenities, access and local transport, to inform future planning and investment for these areas. The review also focused on economic recovery planning following the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including short term actions to improve amenities and activate all 31 shopping centres across Maroondah. In response to the review, infrastructure upgrades were completed to improve the amenity of shopping centres in Paul Street in Croydon; Loughnan Road in Ringwood; and Old Lilydale Road in Ringwood East. These works were undertaken as part of Council's capital works program in consultation with local traders including new footpaths, tree planting and garden bed upgrades and new street furniture such as bins and seats. Place activation projects in Ringwood East and Croydon South were successfully delivered with funding support through the Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund including transformational infrastructure; amenity upgrades; and cultural and engagement initiatives.

## We worked in partnership to support the rollout of three year old kindergarten in Maroondah



Council worked in partnership with the Victorian Government, the Maroondah Incorporated Kindergarten Association and other education service providers to plan for the subsidised roll-out of three-year-old kindergarten in Maroondah. As part of the Victorian Government's kindergarten reform, from 2023 every Victorian three-year-old will be able to access a minimum of five hours per week of funded three-year-old kindergarten, progressively scaling up to 15 hours per week by 2029. The Maroondah Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan has been finalised and is available on the Department of Education and Training (DET) website.

## We supported local business to expand outdoor dining opportunities



To support local hospitality businesses and provide COVIDSafe opportunities for people to meet, Council has worked with a number of centres and traders' associations to provide safe outdoor dining facilities. Supported by funding from the Victorian Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Grants package, the Street Activities Extension Permit scheme provided temporary outdoor dining options for hospitality businesses to shift their service into footpaths, streets, laneways and on-streetcar parking spaces. Council adjusted permit processes and fees to support these changes, helping to bring activity and people back to local shopping centres.



## 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 2021/22

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



Council has commenced implementing the *Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2020-2025*, which outlines Council's role in leading, partnering and supporting arts and cultural development across Maroondah over the next five years. The themes of the strategy include: a culturally active, engaged and connected community; vibrant places and spaces; and a flourishing, creative city that values the arts. Key projects currently underway include significant public art commissions for multi-level commuter carparks and planning for arts and cultural facilities to support the performing arts, including in the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct. Arts activations to support the regeneration of local shopping centres have also taken place, including innovative arts and cultural events within the Ringwood Arts Precinct.



## We continued Karralyka events and performances



Karralyka reopened its doors in November 2021 after nearly two years of closures due to coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions. The theatre season was launched with 'Come Together', an event where guests were treated to food and live music followed by the Australian Rock Collective's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Beatles 'Let It Be' album. Other events included: Margaret Fulton The Musical; The Melbourne Comedy Festival Roadshow; The Sapphires; and a Sing-a-Long-A Sound of Music hosted by Hans The German. In April 2022, Karralyka presented entertainment handpicked from the Adelaide Fringe Festival Gluttony Carnival. The Gluttony On Tour event was held over five days in Croydon Park featuring a celebration of music, circus, burlesque, and local food and wine.

## We delivered place activation projects in neighbourhood activity centres



Place activation projects were successfully delivered in Ringwood East and Croydon South with funding support from the Victorian Government's Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund. Transformational infrastructure and amenity upgrades, and a program of arts activations were undertaken in both centres, with the support of local community, organisations and traders. The Ringwood East Place Activation Project was a finalist in the 2021 Mainstreet Australia Awards and the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Shaun Leane attended the official launch of the Ringwood East laneway park held during Reconciliation Week in May 2022. The features 'Dancing with Creation', a series of works including an Indigenous wall mural and footpath mural in the park and planter boxes realised by Gunnai/Gunditjmarra/Yorta Yorta/Wiradjuri artist Robert Young, Wurundjeri/Yorta Yorta artist Simone Thomson and artists and community members from Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place.

## We continued planning for the redevelopment of Karralyka



Council has commenced design works for a \$15 million redevelopment of Karralyka. Proposed works will be staged are subject to funding. These include a new entrance foyer, outdoor plaza space and improved venue accessibility. Improvements to the loading dock and the replacement of theatre seating will also be considered as part of the staged works. The Stage 1 works including major upgrades to heating, cooling, electrical systems and a backup generator have been completed.

## We supported arts and cultural groups during COVID-19



Council continued to support the creative community impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19) in recognition of the invaluable contribution that creative industries make to local employment, community wellbeing and vitality, tourism, and economic development. Support included continued subsidies for the hire of Council's cultural facilities; Council's 'Arts in Maroondah' social media; and other online platforms providing information and opportunities for networking for individuals and groups. One-off Arts and Cultural Resilience Awards were awarded to eight local artists and cultural groups who received prizes including exhibition space, a creative residency and performance opportunities.



## 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 2021/22

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



Council continued to implement the *Waste, Litter and Resource Recovery Strategy* along with tenders and contracts for waste collection, landfill and the receipt and sorting of recyclables. The main focus of 2021/22 involved preparing for the new Food Organics and Garden Organics service. This new service will include: the changeover of the current maroon garden organics bin lids to the Australian Standard of lime green; roll out of kitchen caddies and compostable liners; and an education and engagement campaign to support the community to separate food waste. Future implementation of the Strategy will also include redirecting waste to an advanced waste and resource recovery facility instead of landfill; a glass only recycling service; and standardising bin lids across the municipality.

#### We Implemented the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Action Plan



The Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan was completed in October 2021 using spatial modelling to identify eight key Biolink Habitat Corridors. Habitat Corridors are pathways through the urban landscape that enable wildlife to move between patches of habitat. These eight Biolink corridors offer the greatest potential to link important areas of core habitat. Detailed action plans will be prepared to identify and scope the actions required to enable each to function as viable habitat corridors.



## We maintained our commitment to help reduce climate change



Council was certified Carbon Neutral by Climate Active during 2021/22. To achieve this certification, significant work was undertaken across all operational areas by implementing energy efficient initiatives and embracing clean energy solutions to create a better and more climate-resilient community. Council joined the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) comprising of 46 Victorian councils to switch to 100% renewable energy to power municipal offices, leisure centres, streetlights, and community buildings. VECO is the largest ever emissions reduction project undertaken by local government in Australia. A new Climate Change Plan is currently being developed to address climate change mitigation, adaptation, and risk. The Plan will ensure that Council continues to pursue best practice in reducing emissions and reliance on carbon offsets, while also reducing climate risk to both Council and the Maroondah community.

## We worked in partnership to implement the Reimagining Tarralla Creek project



Council is working in partnership with Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on the project design and construction of the Tarralla Creek Connects project. The project is one of five trial sites for Melbourne Water's 'Re-imagining Your Creek' program which seeks to enhance the natural environment, create a place for community to connect to nature and one another, improve connectivity, and deliver a resilient and maintainable waterway. Objectives of the project include: 'daylighting' the creek by opening up watercourses and restoring them to more natural conditions; promoting opportunities to interact with the creek; providing habitat and increased biodiversity; and improving local and regional connections. The Maroondah Tarralla Creek Community Planting Day was held in May 2022 to celebrate completion of Stage 1 of the works involving renewal of the Croydon Wetlands and daylighting the creek between Vinter Road and Norton Road in Croydon).

## We introduced environmentally sustainable design into the Maroondah Planning Scheme



Council introduced a Local Policy Planning Scheme Amendment to the Maroondah Planning Scheme as part of its commitment to environmentally sustainable design for the planning, design, construction, operation and management of Council buildings and assets as outlined in the Maroondah Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy. Environmentally sustainable design aims to ensure that developments meet the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by adhering to appropriate environmental design standards. In the absence of a state-wide policy on environmentally sustainable design, several local councils in Victoria coordinated their efforts to introduce a consistent environmentally sustainable policy into their respective planning schemes. The Local Policy Planning Scheme Amendment was adopted by Council in March 2021 and the Minister for Planning approved Amendment C137MARO to the Maroondah Planning Scheme, which came into effect on 7 April 2022.



## 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 2021/22

#### We supported planning for the removal of three railway crossings



Following advocacy by Council over the last five years, the Victorian Government announced that three of Maroondah's level crossings have been added to the removal program including: removal of the level crossing at Bedford Road in Ringwood; removal of the level crossing at Coolstore Road in Croydon and a new station and bus interchange; and removal of the level crossing at Dublin Road in Ringwood East as well as a new station. Council has commenced planning work for these railway crossing removals working closely with the Level Crossing Removal Authority. All three-level crossings are planned to be removed by 2025.



## We progressed new activity centre car parks



Council was awarded \$81.6 million in Australian Government funding for new activity centre car parks in Croydon, Ringwood, Heathmont and at Heatherdale Station. Croydon Activity Centre Carpark was completed and opened for community use in December 2021. The 400 bay facility provides a necessary increase in carparking and improved pedestrian access and amenity to the area. The new multilevel car park at the Ringwood Activity Centre is currently being planned. The Australian Government has funded \$18.9 million for a new carpark servicing the Heathmont Village shopping precinct, Heathmont railway station and bus interchange. Council has completed early investigations for the site to assist with identifying proposed building elevations, pedestrian and traffic improvements, landscaping, and enhancements to the surrounding street and landscape.

## We developed travel enhancement plans for local activity centres



Building on the 20-Minute Neighbourhoods Project undertaken in Croydon South in 2018/19 and 2019/20, Council completed walkability assessments for the Burnt Bridge and Ringwood North shopping centres and their surrounding neighbourhoods in 2021. The assessment evaluated the existing street conditions to support safe, comfortable and enjoyable walking or bike rides. Enhancement Plans recommended a suite of treatments at the shopping centres, local streets and key pedestrian and bicycle routes to improve the accessibility, connectivity and amenity and give pedestrians and cyclists greater priority and safety.

## We improved footpaths and shared trails



Council has continued the implementation of its footpath construction program to provide improved pedestrian safety. Council's footpath construction program for 2021/22 is now complete with 3.13 kilometres of footpath constructed at a total value of \$1.14 million. Renewal works on the Mullum Mullum Creek shared trail has commenced with design and community consultation undertaken for the section from Marilyn Crescent to Kalinda Road in Ringwood.

## We made local area traffic management improvements



Council has allocated funds in its Capital Works Program to install traffic calming measures, including school crossings, intersections, and road surfaces across Maroondah. In 2021/22, Council continued to deliver a range of improvement works. The design of traffic safety improvements along Plymouth Road in Croydon, including installation of traffic signals at the Kirtain Drive intersection, were completed. Carpark improvement works at McAlpin Reserve in Ringwood North were completed in July 2021. Drainage improvement works along New Street in Ringwood, between Molan Street and Sylvia Grove, were completed in June 2022. Construction of improvement works at the intersection of Reilly Street and Wantirna Road in Ringwood will commence in 2021/22.



## 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 2021/22

#### We progressed development of a new Croydon Structure Plan



Council has developed a new draft Structure Plan and planning scheme amendment to reflect the significant changes to the Croydon Major Activity Centre since the first structure plan was developed in 2006. In developing the Plan, Council undertook background research into the issues facing Croydon, including demographic, employment and business, housing supply and demand, and land use issues. An Issues and Opportunities paper was developed after community consultation to inform the draft Plan. The new Structure Plan will plan for and guide the growth of the Croydon community.



## We progressed development of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct



Council is transforming the existing Croydon Civic Precinct into the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct which will focus on delivering improved community spaces, wellbeing facilities, family and children facilities, arts and cultural spaces, sport and recreation facilities, and open space. These combined features, proposed to become integrated community hubs, will improve accessibility and connectivity for the community. The Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan was endorsed by Council in July 2020 and works commenced in early 2021 with a range of community groups moving into Community Hub B during 2021/22. Over the next 12 months, Council will progress development of concept plans for Hubs A and C including community consultation and advocacy for funding.

## We enhanced McAlpin and Yarrunga Reserves



Council was successful in advocating for \$900,000 Victorian Government funding for enhancements at McAlpin and Yarrunga reserves. Works completed at McAlpin Reserve in Ringwood North included a major playspace transformation, with inclusive play equipment, shelters, accessible parking and an improved entry. Works at Yarrunga Reserve in Croydon Hills have resulted in a safer spaces for pre-teens and young adults, a new pedestrian bridge and creation of new BMX jumps. In planning these works, young people were provided with an opportunity to support the design process by sketching their own trail ideas and share photos of other jumps they like to visit.

## We worked in partnership to implement the Greening of the Greyfields project



Council has continued to implement the Greening of the Greyfields project which aims to facilitate a sustainable approach to urban redevelopment in identified residential precincts in Maroondah. Greening of the Greyfields is a ground-breaking approach to residential renewal which involves landowners working together and jointly redeveloping their land at the same time, to positively transform neighbourhoods to be more sustainable with greater neighbourhood character appeal. Council exhibited the planning scheme amendments in early 2021 for two Greening the Greyfields precincts in Ringwood and Croydon South. The Planning Panel appointed to consider the submissions supported the amendments and Council adopted the Panel recommendations. It is anticipated that further precincts will be identified within the municipality, and a similar approach applied to transform other local neighbourhoods.

## We undertook flood mitigation works



Council continued to undertake flood mitigation works in Ringwood, Ringwood East and Croydon during the past year. Drainage upgrade works in New Street were completed in June 2022. Design of the Sherbrook East drainage catchment and the Scenic Avenue, Ringwood East commenced in 2021/22 with the next stage of the works to be completed in 2022/23. Flood mitigation works at Wingate Avenue, Ringwood East commenced in December 2021 involving the realignment and upgrade of the floodway pipe drainage.



## 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 2021/22

#### We implemented the Positive Ageing Framework and Action Plan



Council has commenced implementation of the *Positive Ageing Framework and Action Plan 2021-2025* which was launched in April 2022. The Action Plan aims to build on the success of the *Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative 2015-2020*, and addresses the current challenges faced by an ageing population. Positive ageing embraces the idea of being active, connected, valued and respected as we grow older in our community. There are six key priority areas in the Plan: social connections, community, quality of life, safety and security, health and wellbeing and respect. The Framework and Action Plan will guide and assist Council to continue to make Maroondah a vibrant and renowned age-friendly city in which to live, work and play over the next five years.

#### We developed a new Disability Action Plan



Council has developed a draft *Disability Action Plan 2022-2026* which is Council's vision for disability and inclusion for Maroondah, with equitable opportunities for people of all abilities, their families and their carers to actively and fully participate. The draft Action Plan was developed through direct engagement with community members and stakeholders to identify the challenges faced by people with disabilities in Maroondah, including those arising from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Plan will be presented to Council for adoption in early 2022/23.



## We continued our commitment to workplace equality



Council has proactively pursued a range of organisational initiatives in the past 12 months to fulfil the requirements of the new *Gender Equality Act 2020*. The new Act came into effect from 31 March 2021 and places a greater onus on the Victorian public sector including Councils to improve workplace gender equality and influence equality for communities in policy, programs and service delivery. As part of our obligations under the Act, Council will undertake workplace audits, gender impact assessments, develop an Action Plan, and submit progress reports. Over the past twelve months, Council has commenced a range of initiatives to fulfil the requirements of the legislation including preparation of a Gender Equality Action Plan and undertaking Gender Impact Assessments to consider the different needs of women, men and gender diverse people when developing policies, or delivering programs and services.

## We supported volunteer-based organisations and facilitated volunteerism within Maroondah



Council continued to support volunteer-based organisations and volunteerism in Maroondah during 2021/22. A partnership with Eastern Volunteers was established during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to provide a suite of training programs for volunteer-led community organisations in Maroondah. Funding was also provided for a range of governance health checks which were undertaken by Eastern Volunteers for volunteer-led community groups and organisations in Maroondah. Council also supported and number of local culturally and linguistically diverse community groups to develop future strategic plans for their organisations and continued to implement its volunteering and student placement programs which provide opportunities for volunteers and students to support the wider community.

## We provided support for linguistically and culturally diverse groups during COVID-19



Council provided a range of support for local culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Council's emergency relief and referral system implemented partnerships with CALD groups to ensure vulnerable people had access to local support agencies. Throughout 2021/22, information on coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, testing and vaccinations were offered in Council's website in a range of different languages to cater for our diverse communities. This included translations of content into languages not provided by the Victorian or Australian Governments, Council also facilitated the provision of mental health training to two CALD community groups and worked with EACH to organise coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination 'pop-up' sites. Council also worked closely with the Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network and the Department of Health to rollout rapid antigen tests to local CALD community groups across the eastern region.



## 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 2021/22

We provided community grant funding to local groups and organisations



Council provided more than \$208,643 in funding to 73 Maroondah community organisations benefitted as part of the 2022/23 Community Grants Funding Program. The annual grants are allocated to eligible projects that increase community participation; address a community need; or provide assistance to a group in need. There are three schemes covering community development, small equipment, and emergency food relief. In addition, seven cultural community organisations benefitted from \$23,273 in funding from the 2022/23 Arts and Cultural Grants Program which supports community driven projects, initiatives and events that increase arts profile and participation. This year's community grant recipients are drawn from a broad range of community groups, with a significant amount of funding being allocated to emergency relief, mental health programs, and programs that support children, youth, seniors and disability groups.



## We supported provision of emergency relief to the community



Council has continued to provide support to Maroondah emergency relief agencies during the past 12 months with agencies reporting consistently high levels of demand for services. Network activities have included supporting organisations to operate during periods of lockdown and heavy restrictions; coordination of community meals and material aid parcels; working to secure weekly supply of food produce; providing information on coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, testing options and vaccination availability; working with EACH to arrange vaccination 'pop-ups' at community meal locations; and the rollout of rapid antigen tests to local emergency relief agencies supporting vulnerable community members.

## We developed a new Customer Service Strategy



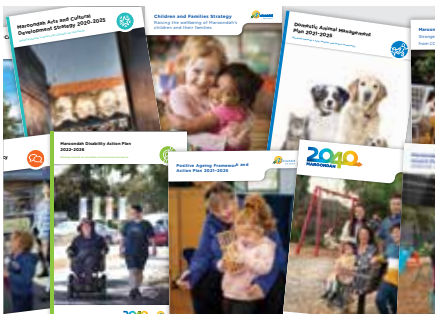
Council has developed a new *Customer Service Strategy 2021-2025* to help meet customer needs today and into the future. Adopted in October 2021, the Strategy is founded on principles of customer service quality, customer service experience, customer service engagement and customer service culture. The future direction harnesses a distinct connection with changing customer expectations, advancing technology, and the need to maintain strong customer engagement and rich customer experiences. Over the 2021-2025 period, this Strategy will include a focus on the development of online engagement channels and strengthening internal service partnerships.

## We finalised a new Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025



Council adopted a new *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* in October 2021 after an extensive community engagement process. The Plan is required by legislation and prioritises animal management projects to support responsible pet ownership. Actions highlighted in the current Plan include consolidating of Council's animal registration database, continued partnership with Animal Aid to address state-wide concerns on animal abandonment, and activities aimed at reducing the number of stray and lost animals being impounded.

## We completed changes under the new Local Government Act 2020



Council has completed changes required under the new *Local Government Act 2020* which commenced from 6 April 2020. The new Act required Council to develop, revise and adopt specific policies within set timeframes in 2020/21 and 2021/22 including election, public transparency and audit and risk policies. The Act aims to improve local government democracy, accountability and Council operations by introducing a set of overarching guiding principles which include community engagement, public transparency, strategic planning, good practice guidelines, service performance, and expanded financial management principles. All policies required to be adopted have been completed by 30 June 2022.

**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

 MaroondahCityCouncil

 maroondahcitycouncil

 Maroondah City Council

 CityofMaroondah

 Maroondah City Council

